Time running out on power reform bill

STORY ON PAGE A2

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INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2001 ★ 56 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 172 ₱15

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **1,400 US troops coming**
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  METRO / A21

Broadcaster shot dead in Zamboanga

BY JONATHAN F. MA
AND JULIE ALIPALA-INOT
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A hard-hitting radio commentator on his way to work was shot and killed by two motorcycle-riding men on the outskirts of this city yesterday morning.

BROADCASTER/ A17

VAL HANDUMON

IN PALAWAN, elite Army troopers armed with modern assault weapons are all set for action.

IN BASILAN, soldiers patrol the waters as part of a massive blocking force against the Dos Palmas kidnappers who are holding 20 hostages.

DENNIS SABANGAN

US offers to help RP track down Sayyaf

Maceda: US lent out hi-tech equipment in Jolo crisis

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

THE UNITED States yesterday rushed to the aid of the Philippine government in its battle of wits and nerves with Abu Sayyaf bandits who threatened to kill their three American and 17 Filipino hostages.

In a surprise meeting, US officials called on President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang to discuss the latest kidnapping of the 20 hostages from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on Sunday.

"We look forward to working together on contacts at all levels, including military-to-military," Congressman Robert Underwood, who led the American team, said after the meeting. He did not give details.

US charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski described the meeting as "very good" but said details of the dialogue were confidential.

"It's an act of outrage that groups like these are taking innocent people. We hope to see the hostages released and this incident ended as soon as possible," Malinowski said.

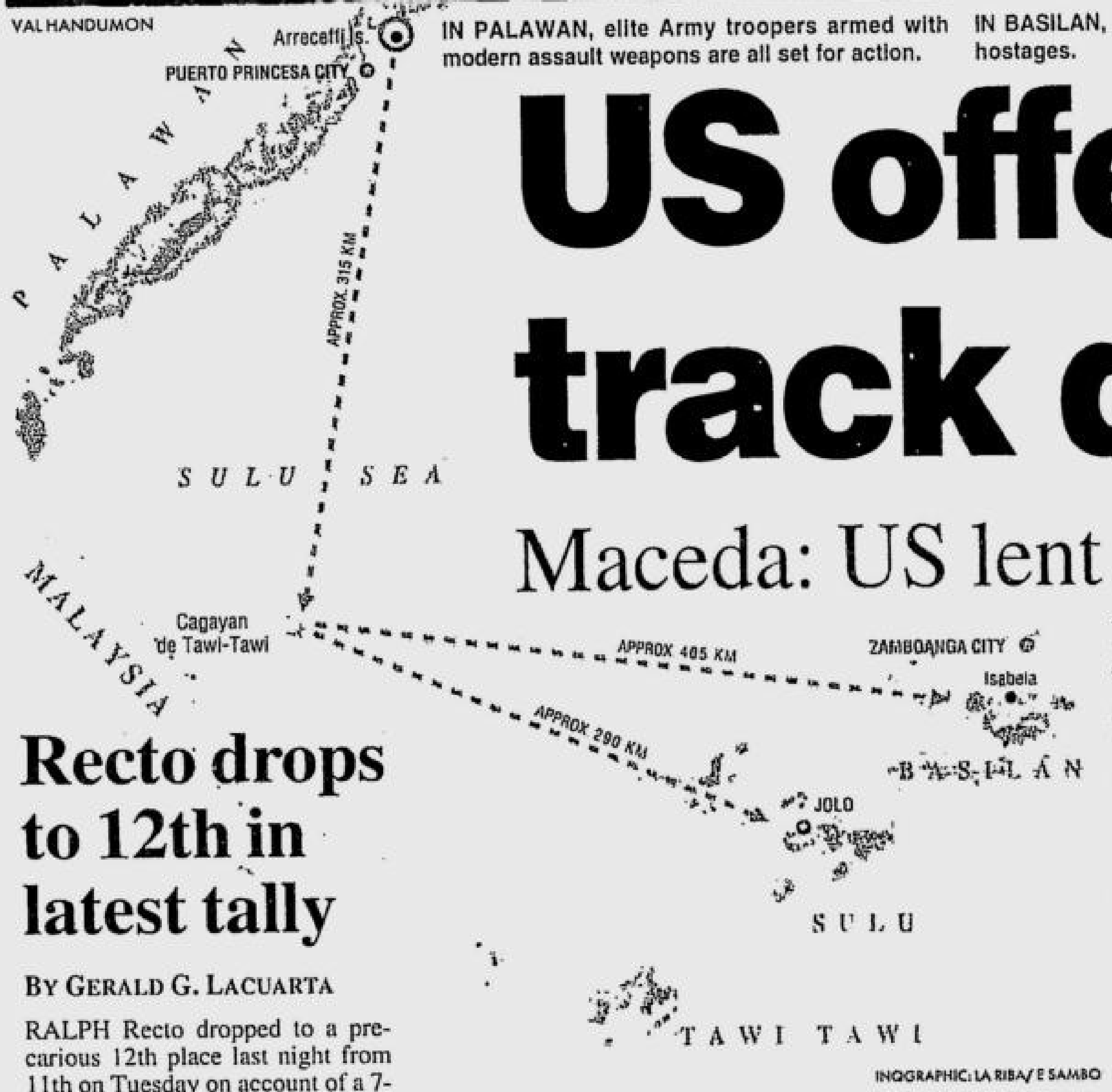
Ernesto Maceda, former Philippine ambassador to Washington, said the US government was likely to again lend out its high-tech surveillance equipment in tracking down the kidnappers.

Maceda said Washington covertly provided Manila such technical assistance during the Sulu hostage crisis last year.

He described the surveillance equipment as "high-powered that can scan (jungles) from an aircraft."

Maceda disclosed that then Philippine National Police

US /A18



INQGRAPHIC: LA RIBA/ E SAMBO

Recto drops to 12th in latest tally

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

RALPH Recto dropped to a precarious 12th place last night from 11th on Tuesday on account of a 7-5-1 victory of the opposition's Puwersa ng Masa in Caloocan City whose certificate of canvass was the only one counted by the Commission on Elections yesterday.

With only 124,684 votes in Caloocan, Recto was dislodged by former first lady Loi Ejercito who got 163,403 votes. At the suspension of canvassing on Tuesday, Recto was leading Ejercito by 36,527 votes.

The Comelec, acting as the National Board of Canvassers (NBC), counted only the certificate of canvass of Caloocan City because the remaining COCs from Eastern Samar, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte and Maguindanao did not arrive.

Former Immigration Commis-

RECTO/ A15

COMELEC

as of 7 p.m., May 30

98 out of 102 COCs (96.10%)

1	DE CASTRO	15,813,548
2	FLAVIER	11,450,066
3	OSMEÑA	11,266,982
4	DRILON	11,012,579
5	ARROYO	10,946,554
6	MAGSAYSAY	10,929,888
7	VILLAR	10,876,979
8	PANGILINAN	10,673,072
9	ANGARA	10,570,848
10	LACSON	10,358,523
11	EJERCITO	10,202,086
12	RECTO	10,199,894
13	HONASAN	10,118,945
14	ENRILE	9,385,490
15	SANTIAGO	9,363,127
16	PUNO	8,491,861
17	TAÑADA	7,938,378
18	MERCADO	7,644,903
19	PAGDANGANAN	6,948,374
20	HERRERA	6,580,532

AP/MALACANANG PHOTO

PRESIDENT Macapagal welcomes US Congressman Robert Underwood to Malacañang where they discussed possible cooperation in the search and rescue operations of three American and 17 Filipino hostages.

Ramos, MILF caution gov't vs vigilantes

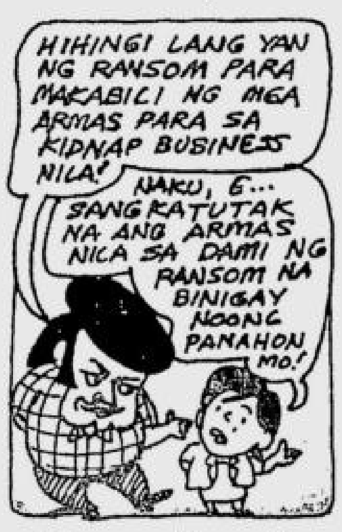
BY TJ BURGONIO, CARLITO PABLO
AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos, two senators, militant groups and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) cautioned the military against using vigilante groups in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Ramos said using vigilante groups against the Abu Sayyaf would pose problems because these were not members of the Armed Forces.

"That is a double-edged weapon because vigilantes are not subject to the articles of war and the disciplinary rules and regulations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Ramos told a briefing at

RAMOS/ A16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Erap backs Gloria vs Abu Sayyaf

BY DONNA CUETO,
LEONCIO BALBIN JR.
PDI N. Luzon Bureau
AND ODON S. BANDIOLA
PDI Visayas Bureau

THE ABU Sayyaf abduction of 20 people from a Palawan resort is turning out to be a replay of last year's hostage drama.

At least two major players in the Sulu hostage crisis are trying to make a comeback of sorts.

ERAP/ A17

Malacañang defends news blackout

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL
AND CARLITO PABLO

MALACAÑANG yesterday took pains to explain its news-blackout policy, saying it was being implemented for the sake of the hostages, and not of the administration.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao told reporters that the policy had four "elements," the first being the directive that no other official could speak about military operations involving the rescue of the hostages except for Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

He said neither the administration nor "any other unauthorized police or AFP personnel" could disclose "any information on the operations of the military against the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group)."

Tiglao said the three other "elements" of the news blackout were the President's appeals that the media:

- Not go to areas in Sulu and Basilan or other places where military operations were being undertaken.
- Not disclose the identities and backgrounds of the hostages.
- Not give air time or newspaper space to the leaders of the Abu Sayyaf.

Tiglao said Abu Sayyaf leaders wanted "to falsely project themselves as Islamic fighters, and even rebels" when they were "plain and

MALACAÑANG/ A16

'It's possible they have reached Sulu'

BY CARLITO PABLO

THE ARMED Forces yesterday came a step closer to acknowledging its worst fear: that the bandit group Abu Sayyaf had reached its strongholds in Sulu together with its 20 hostages.

"It's possible they have already reached Sulu," said AFP spokesperson Brig Gen. Edilberto Adan.

In a briefing earlier in the day, Adan said that based on the lessons learned from last year's Sipadan hostage crisis, it would be harder for the government if the bandits were able to get to their bases where they could hold out with the support of sympathetic residents.

"When they reach their main bases, they can farm out their hostages and make the situation more difficult," he said.

Adan said the Abu Sayyaf had apparently taken three more hostages in the vicinity of Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi Island, which is halfway between Palawan and the Sulu archipelago.

He said that on Monday evening, the bandits seized five fishermen and commandeered their motorboat.

Of the five, two managed to escape and later told authorities that they saw three Americans among the people being held by the gunmen.

On Tuesday, Adan said, Marines scouring Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi found an automated teller machine (ATM) card and an Olympus camera.

He did not say who among the 17 Filipinos and three Americans taken Sunday from the Dos Palmas

IT'S/ A18

Second FRONT PAGE

PAANO MATATAPOS YAN E MAY BINABAGO?

Time runs out on power bill

By Christine Avendaño

WITH ITS four-day special session ending today, Congress has run out of time to approve the power sector reform bill.

Senators supporting the measure remained undaunted, however, as they still have next week when the 11th Congress resumes its regular session on June 4 before finally adjourning on June 7.

The chances of the power bill getting Congress' approval narrowed yesterday after the Senate bicameral committee panel decided to "report out again" its final draft following the discovery of unauthorized modifications.

This means that the draft goes back to be worked on again by the Senate.

It was not certain whether the Senate panel would be able to meet today with its House counterpart to reconcile their respective versions of the measure.

"It is all up in the air," Sen. John Osmeña, chair of the Senate bicameral committee, said when asked about the chances of the bill being ratified today.

"I don't know because I'm not in a position to judge what is going to be the attitude of my colleagues," he said.

But he, Sen. Francisco Tatad and Sen. Serge Osmeña said the measure could still be worked on when Congress resumes its regular session from June 4 to 7.

Osmeña said the attempted changes on the Senate final draft had to do with a "sensitive provision" involving the power of the Energy Regulatory Commission to set electricity rates. He did not elaborate and refused to give details.

Osmeña blamed a congressman for the changes, saying that a staff member of the congressman had called up the Senate staff the other day to make the modifications.

He did not name the congressman who made what he deemed were "improper" and "surreptitious" changes.

"If a congressman wants to make changes, he should put his changes in the House version and not in the Senate version, and he should call up the chairman of the Senate (panel) if he wants to have an accommodation in the Senate version, all of which he did not do," Osmeña said.

A highly reliable source said that a certain Lina, a staff member of Negros Occidental Rep. Julio Ledesma, was the one who called up Senate staff member Alan Ortiz for him to make the changes in the Senate draft.

Ledesma is the chair of the House energy committee.

But the source said that he believes Ledesma had "good intentions" when he sought to make the changes.

Opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, a member of the Senate panel, said the ERC's power to set rates were provided for in the proposed Senate draft "for the protection of the consuming public."

"If they (the House) make changes without our knowledge, that's dangerous because it could injure the interest of the public," Enrile said in Taglish.

Asked what these attempted changes were, Enrile said: "It has something to do with the rates that can be collected by the operating companies in the industry—whether distribution generation or transmission companies—from the public, so it's very substantial."

But another panel member, Sen. Serge Osmeña, downplayed the attempted modifications as involving only "editorial changes" in the Senate final draft.

"The Senate and House committee staff made editorial changes which was misunderstood by John as a substantial change," he said.

Serge Osmeña said the changes were made to "harmonize the definition of the various type of rates" charged to private distribution utilities for their supply of electricity to consumers.

For instance, a change was made on the term "distribution retail supply rate." It was changed simply to retail rate, which he said was the rate to be charged to electricity consumers.

The Senate bicameral panel meeting ended yesterday with John Osmeña ordering the preparation of a "matrix" showing the respective power measures of the Senate and the House and the proposed changes.

Enrile said he had requested for the preparation of the matrix.

Yesterday's Senate bicameral committee panel meeting at the Westin Philippine Plaza hotel also managed to stir controversy when hotel security barred some reporters from covering it.

Florante Rosales, a reporter for dzRH radio who was barred from going to the room where the senators were meeting, loudly protested the action.

Palace still hopeful of bill's OK

By J. Javellana

WHILE it hopes that Congress would ratify the power reform bill at the end of the four-day special session today, Mala-cañang is already planning to ask the Senate and the House to extend their special session should the measure fail to pass.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said it was an option open to the President in the face of reports that the Senate energy committee chair, Sen. John Osmeña, has ruled out the ratification of the bill today.

But Tiglao said time may be running out because both chambers are to convene to formally adjourn the 11th Congress next week.

The new 12th Congress does not open until late July, during which the President will deliver her first State of the Nation Address.

Tiglao said it will be Presidential Legislative Liaison Officer Gabriel Claudio who would recommend to the President "what else" she could do to ensure the bill's ratification today.

Tiglao said Malacañang was not aware what, if anything, Osmeña wants, even as he denied there was any horse-trading involved in the deliberations for the passage of the power bill.

Tiglao said the President and Claudio are still confident that the power measure, as well as the supplemental budget bill, would be passed today.

Tiglao said Claudio had reported to the President yesterday morning that he was confident the power and budget bills would be passed before the end of the special session.

Claudio's report, however, made no mention of Osmeña's statement that there might not be a ratification today.

"There are no indications that these two urgent things would be blocked in Congress. We're still keeping our fingers crossed and hoping that they will be passed and we're appealing to the lawmakers to enact these bills into law," Tiglao said in an afternoon briefing.

In a radio interview yesterday, Tiglao denied there was any horse-trading between Malacañang and Congress to ensure the bill's ratification.

He said the President has been talking to individual senators and congressmen to explain the government's position on those points where there are objections.

Tiglao stressed the urgency of the passage of the power bill, which would pave the way for the restructuring of the power sector and the privatization of the debt-laden National Power Corp.

In her TV offensives, the President said one of the causes of poverty in the country was the high electricity rates, which she said would be lowered once the power sector is restructured and the Napocor is sold.

"The debts of Napocor are like a taxi meter which goes on each day. There are too many problems (in the power sector). There may be questions about the bill now but this will be the start of a solution to the problems. We cannot afford a status quo. That would be very difficult," Tiglao said.

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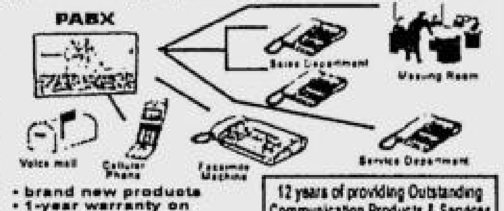

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Letter bares John O agenda in power bill

SEN. John Osmeña has been harassing and pressuring owners of a power utility firm in Cebu City to sell out or divest themselves of their majority interest in the firm in exchange for the deletion of the controversial provision in the Omnibus Power Bill limiting ownership of such utility firms.

In a 1999 letter to Tony Garcia of the Visayas Electric Co. (Veco), Osmeña claimed the divestment would result in the "democratization of ownership in public utilities."

Copy of the letter was provided the media by a source, who said Osmeña had a "hidden personal agenda" in insisting on what was described as an "unconstitutional provision" that would pave the way for the takeover of small power utilities by the big utilities.

Also at the Senate, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile revealed that anti-consumer provisions, like abuses in the setting of retail rates and the passing on to consumers the billions of pesos in income taxes of Meralco, are still contained in the bicameral version of the bill.

Enrile warned that the people should brace themselves for the "shocking effects" of increased power rates because there are not enough safeguards to protect consumers against "exploitative and abusive" power firms in the bill's latest version.

Osmeña was said to be amenable to amendments to his pet bill except for Section 28, which provides for a mandatory listing of small power utilities and distributors in the Philippine Stock Exchange. The provision will also limit ownership of these companies to 15 percent.

Exempted from this provision are power utilities already listed in the stock market, such as Meralco and the holding company of the Aboitiz Group, which owns the Davao Light and Power Co., the Cotabato Light and Power Co., and the San Fernando Light and Power Co., its most recent acquisition.

Osmeña is related to the Aboitizes by marriage while another power bill supporter, Sen. Sergio Osmena III, is married to a Lopez, the family that controls Meralco.

The source said that the provision compelling small power firms to list with the PSE when all of them are already publicly owned is not only arbitrary but also "a deliberate maneuver" to force the smaller firms to sell out to bigger and monopolistic companies or to close shop.

According to the source, Osmeña had been calling the owners of small power firms to voluntarily sell their controlling interests which only the Aboitiz group or Meralco has the capacity and the interest to buy.

In a press statement, Enrile enumerated what he called serious flaws and onerous provisions in the bill whose impact will be shouldered by the people.

These include too much focus on generation and not enough controls in rate setting. He said the provisions in the bicam's version on controlling monopolies are "mostly symbolic and not real."

Enrile added that Section 67 of the bill in its present form, "puts in limbo" the country's need for additional power because it practically appropriates the whole power market to Napocor's transition supply contract and some favored private contracts.

He added that the bill contains "very weak language" in eliminating abusive pricing provisions in privately negotiated contracts.

Senate sources said that Osmeña has been telling members of the bicameral conference committee that he was amenable to any amendment except Section 28 which was non-negotiable to the Cebuano solon.

The source said that Osmeña's personal agenda to take over and control the ownership of small power firms was clearly reflected in his stand that he would rather "kill" the bill than delete Section 28.

Priest stages power run vs power bill

MILITANT groups led by running priest Fr. Robert Reyes staged a "protest run" yesterday to intensify their protest against the power sector reform bill.

Reyes led the Sanlakas, the Freedom from Debt Coalition, and Gabriela in the "Power Run vs. Power Bill," which started from the National Power Corp. office at 9 a.m. and ended at noon at the Mendiola Bridge where the groups held a short program.

Some 50 members of the Western Police District's civil disturbance management unit were waiting for the protesters at Mendiola.

"The power bill is deceptive, immoral, lopsided and non-transparent. Many people, many of the poor do not understand the power bill. It actually passes off Napocor's debt to the people," Reyes told reporters.

He also blasted Malacañang, energy and Napocor officials for "railroading" the power bill.

"Why are they so in a hurry to pass, the power bill?" Reyes asked.

Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza said the government was "hell bent on passing the power bill despite protest movements."

Fortaleza and Reyes also said they would continue with their scheduled "Power Off" protest, in which households will be asked to switch off their electricity and hold a noise barrage to express their protest over the power bill and the PPA.

Alcuin Papa

Prosecutors ask dismissal of graft case vs Estrada

By Donna S. Cueto

IN YET another serio-comic twist to the Estrada corruption trial, a state special prosecutor yesterday inexplicably asked the Sandiganbayan to dismiss a graft case against the ousted President that had already been withdrawn.

Prosecutor Leonardo Tamayo asked the Sandiganbayan 2nd division to dismiss the graft case against Estrada, saying there was "insufficient evidence" when the case was filed a month ago.

In it, Estrada is accused of having allegedly obtained profit-commissions worth P189.7 million from the purchase by the Government Service Insurance System and the Social Security System of P1.85 billion shares of stock from Belle Corp., a company allegedly owned by his close friends and associates.

Estrada had allegedly "manipulated, pressured and compelled" the GSIS and the SSS to buy a total of 681,733,000 shares of stock from Belle, from September to October 1999.

The Ombudsman had sought the withdrawal of the graft case it had filed on April 24, 20 days after it had filed the case.

The court granted the motion, but then Estrada's lawyers objected. They wanted the court to reconsider its resolution so it could hear the graft case or dismiss it "with prejudice" against its re-filing.

What then happened in yesterday's hearing was a seeming reversal of roles—with the prosecution seeking the dismissal of the case, and the defense pushing the court to hear the graft case.

Floored

The Sandiganbayan justices were almost floored when the prosecution admitted it had "insufficient evidence" to prove probable cause when it earlier filed the graft charges.

More so when Tamayo said he agreed with the Estrada lawyer, Pacifico Agabin, that the graft case should be dismissed for "insufficiency of evidence."

The almost comic exchange started when Justice Edilberto Sandoval asked if the prosecution was prepared to continue with the case had the court not allowed its withdrawal.

Tamayo said: "Of course, yes, your honor."

"Will you present your evidence?" Sandoval asked.

"Of course, yes, your honor," Tamayo again replied.

"So why don't you proceed with the case then?" the court asked.

Tamayo explained that the Ombudsman sought the withdrawal of the graft case because it was part of the plunder case filed with the Sandiganbayan's 3rd division.

He said Ombudsman Aniano Desierto thought it best to withdraw the case rather than to seek its consolidation with the plunder case, like he did with the cases of perjury and illegal use of an alias.

'Bottom line'

The "bottom line," he concluded, was that there was insufficient evidence to prove the P189.7 million graft case.

That is why the Ombudsman and the special prosecutors did not comply with the order of the Sandiganbayan to provide the court with copies of witnesses' affidavits against Estrada in the graft case to prove probable cause.

Agabin argued before the court that the case should be dismissed "with prejudice" against the prosecution, to prevent the re-filing of the case against his client.

At one point, the court, puzzled by the actions of the defense and the prosecution, questioned why the defense was objecting to the withdrawal of the case against Estrada which, one justice said, virtually amounted to a dismissal of the case.

Agabin replied that the Ombudsman could still harass Estrada by filing the case again.

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Erratum

In Crossing's Department Store's 7th anniversary sale promo advertisement, which appears today in the Inquirer's page D1, the duration of the sale indicated should read **June 1-30, 2001**, not June 1-3.

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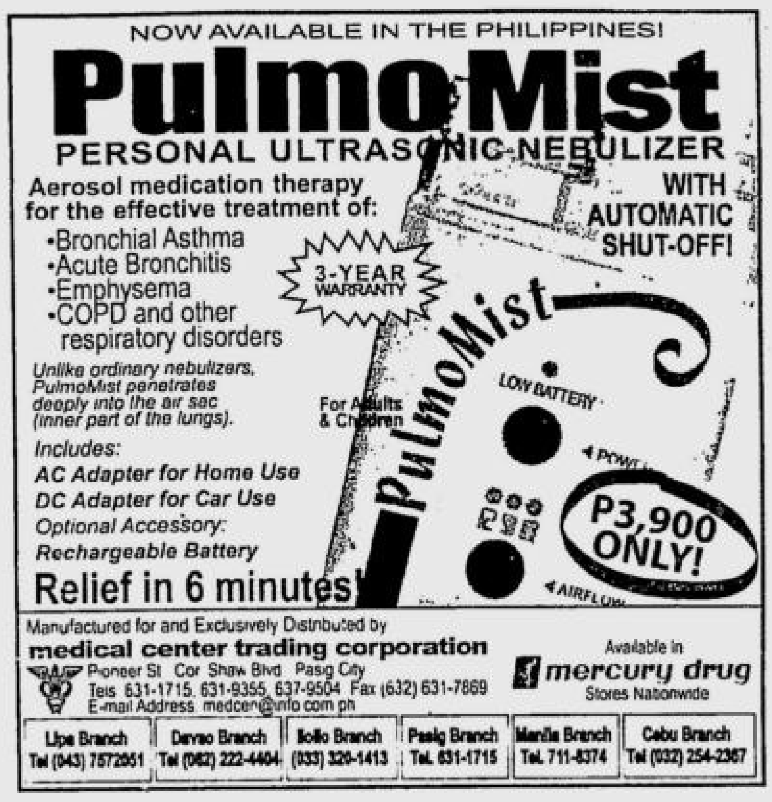
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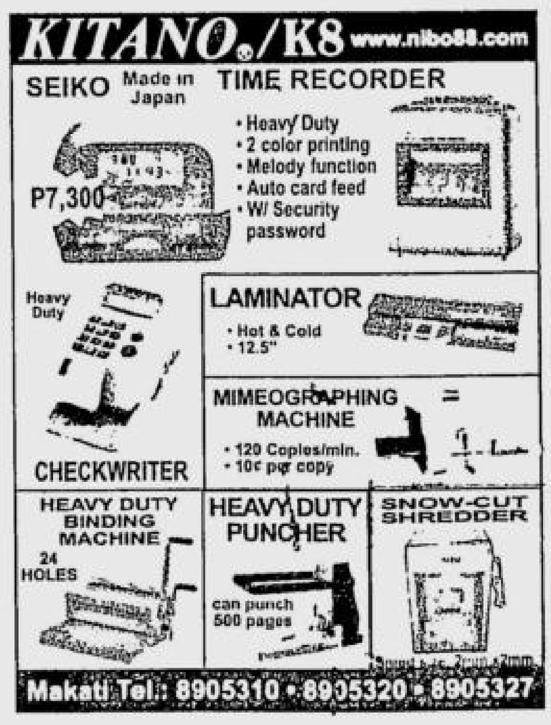
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9 OF 52 SO FAR

Not enough party-list winners

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

THERE might not be enough winners in the party-list elections to fill the 52 seats reserved for party-list groups in the House of Representatives.

This after the canvass of party-list votes as of May 29 showed that only nine groups were meeting the two-percent minimum vote requirement with 13.6 million votes already counted.

Figures obtained by the INQUIRER showed that of the nine party-list groups, only Bayan Muna and Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD) had gotten more than six percent of the vote to earn a maximum of three House seats each.

Bayan Muna, whose nominees include militant leaders Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran and Lisa Maza, had obtained 12.47 percent of the 13.6 million votes counted so far.

MAD, which has actor Richard Gomez and Chief Supt. Jewel Canson for its nominees, had 9.73 percent.

Also aiming for three seats was the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives with 5.33 percent and the Veterans Federation Party with 4.46 percent of the votes so far.

Six other groups that are meeting the two-percent requirement are the Nationalist People's Coalition, 2.68 percent; Luzon Farmers Party (Butil), 2.45 percent; Akbayan, 2.44; Lakas-NUCD, 2.37, and Citizens Battle Against Crime and Corruption (Cibac), 2.08. Akbayan had protested an earlier INQUIRER story that inadvertently overlooked the group on the list of sure winners.

Buhay Hayaang Yumabong (Buhay), a party backed by the El Shaddai religious group, needs just .03 percent more of the vote to reach the minimum requirement for a Congress seat.

Groups that are also trying to make the two-percent vote minimum are the Alyansang Bayanihan ng mga Magsasaka, Manggagawang Bukid at Mangingisda (ABA) with 1.74 percent, and the Cooperative Natcoo Network Party, 1.64 percent.

In the first party-list elections in 1998, where 50 seats were allocated for party-list groups, only 13 groups qualified, leaving 38 seats vacant.

The nominees of the 38 groups which came after the winning 13 were proclaimed just the same but the Supreme Court ruled they were not entitled to the seats just to fill the 50 slots.

For the party-list elections this year, the Commission on Elections set aside 52 House seats in compliance with Party-List Law which requires that party-list representatives comprise 20 percent of the House membership.

Bayan Muna, Akbayan and other groups had sought the disqualification of 17 party-list groups, including the major political parties and MAD, as their participation allegedly violated the spirit of the party-list law which aims to give marginalized and underrepresented sectors of society a chance to be represented in Congress.

Susan Ople, nominee of Citizens Drug Watch, said the Comelec should have resolved all petitions filed against MAD and other party-list groups before the elections.

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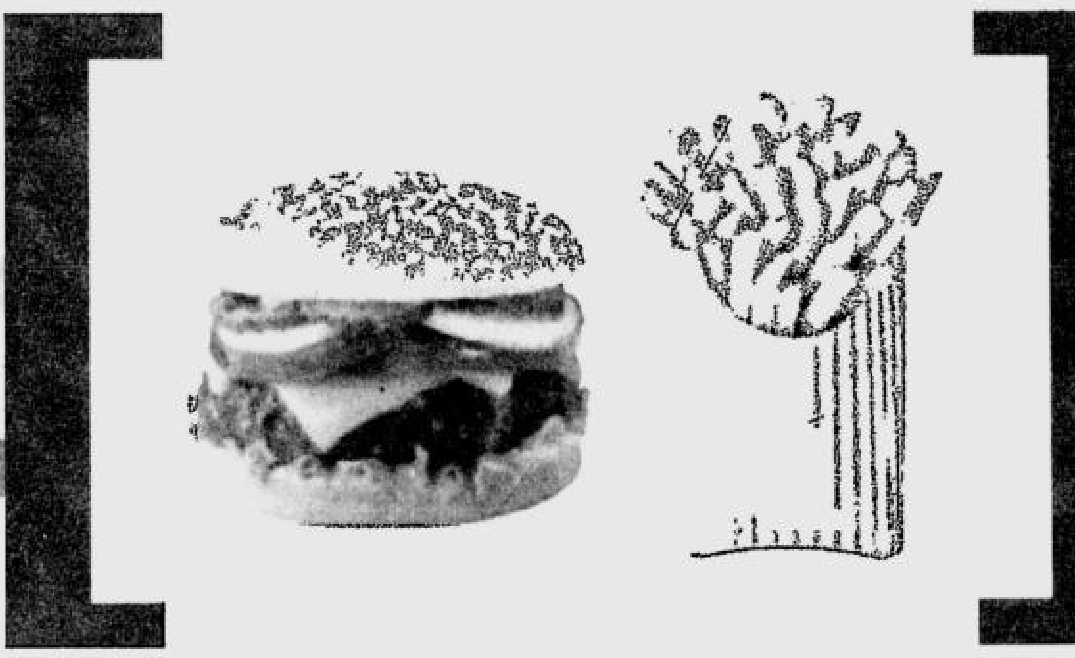

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NBI zeroing in on Ping's aides in Dacer slays

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is now zeroing in on four former aides of ex-national police chief Panfilo Lacson, who are all wanted for complicity in the Nov. 24 abduction and murder of Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said agents of the NBI National Capital Region have intensified the hunt for Police Supt. Glen Dumlao, Police Chief Insp. Vicente Arnado and Police Inspectors Roberto Langcaon and Danilo Villanueva.

The four police officers were members of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force which was headed by Lacson. They were the highest-ranking policemen to be formally charged by the NBI and the justice department in the Dacer and Manuel Corbito double murder case.

The NBI had originally planned to indict Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña, former PAOCTF Visayas chief, but desisted from filing charges for some mysterious reason.

Viña is believed to have supervised the whole operation, from the surveillance to the kidnapping and to the execution of Dacer and his driver.

Lacson has been linked to the crimes because of his close association with Viña. Under the doctrine of command responsibility, Lacson could also be charged on account of the involvement of his men in the Dacer case.

Wycoco said, however, that "the doctrine does not apply to persons charged with criminal cases."

With the NBI and justice department's failure to charge Viña and Lacson, unmasking the masterminds behind the Dacer killing would be impossible, an NBI insider said.

Students told: Pay for quality

BY BLANCHE S. RIVERA

YOU want quality, you have to pay for it.

This was the Commission on Higher Education's reply to complaints about the new round of tuition increases this year.

CHEd Commissioner Manuel Punzal said fee hikes were "normal" and necessary to maintain quality education in the tertiary schools.

He also said students' threats to hold massive protests on school opening day next week were "nothing new" since the "ticklish" tuition issue comes up every year.

Punzal said the CHEd could not be expected to stop tuition increases as private schools are guided by market forces and have to raise their fees to survive.

"You have to see education as an enterprise," Punzal said during the launching by Informatics of the first full-term online courses in the country Tuesday.

"Quality education does not come cheap. If you want quality, you (must) pay good money for it," he said.

The latest CHEd report showed that 452 private tertiary schools nationwide and 26 state colleges and universities in Mindanao will be raising their fees by an average of 15 percent this year.

The College Editors Guild of the Philippines has lambasted the CHEd and the Macapagal administration for failing to check the annual increases in the cost of education.

It charged that some of the schools imposing higher fees failed to comply with the CHEd requirement that students and other interested parties must be consulted before any fees are hiked.

The CEGP also said many of the schools had pending cases with the CHEd.

Navasero, 67

UPSILON Sigma Phi of the University of the Philippines, the country's oldest fraternity, lost another brod with the death of Victor "Saxo" Navasero Jr. on Tuesday after a lingering illness. He was 67.

Navasero was a member of the Upsilon batch '55 of UP Los Baños and was a member of the UPLB varsity basketball team.

His remains lie at the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Chapel in UP Los Baños where he will receive the last rites from his brods on Saturday. Interment will be on Sunday at the Los Baños Memorial Garden after a 2 p.m. Mass.

He is survived by his wife Guia Bucks, children and grandchildren Victor III and Nani Icasiano and Brian; Ghizelle and Tim Miguel and Joshua, Dominic and Isabela; Michelle and Edu Mendoza and Emico; Hazel and Mitch de Padua and Antonio, Mikael, and Bianca; and Romano and Mona Javier and Nicole and Simone; brothers and sisters-in-law Hector and Sylvia Arnaldo; Nestor and Evelyn Palmiano; Ador and Carmen Culanag; sister Luz Amandolina (Mandy); Gary and Delia Sales; and Ding.

Dimayuga, 75

AMADEO A. Dimayuga, former official of the Quality Assurance Division of the National Power Corp., of Pasadena, California, and San Juan, Batangas, died on Sunday in Pasadena. He was 75 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Adoracion, and sons, Rawlinson and Caesar. His remains will be flown in from the United States on or before Sunday June 3. Interment will be announced later.

DOS PALMAS RAID

RP tourism takes a beating

ARRECIFFE ISLAND, Palawan—Birds chirped from palm trees, fish splashed under an alluring blue sky and the Dos Palmas resort had never been safer.

Despite the idyllic setting, few took time to enjoy it. Instead, the people who came to the tiny island for a getaway were doing just that—getting away as fast as possible by boat and helicopter. The bolstered security presence just served as a reminder that some of their fellow holiday-makers were now hostages.

Sea-borne Abu Sayyaf raiders kidnapped three Americans and 17 Filipinos at this island resort on Sunday.

Tourism operators said Wednesday that the shock has rippled nationwide and heralds a tough year.

"This should be the height of the holiday season and the repercussions are very serious," said Marilen Yeptangco, president of Baron Travel, one of the country's largest travel agencies. "We have had 100 percent cancellations or rerouting for Palawan. Many Filipinos are even rebooking their domestic vacations to go to foreign destinations like Hong Kong."

Yeptangco, speaking on behalf of the Philippine Travel Agencies' Association, said the industry already speaks of "post-Palawan and pre-Palawan" when talking about business plans.

The association, which includes agents, airlines, resorts and hotels, held an impromptu Mass on Tuesday evening to pray for the safe release of the hostages.

The US Embassy in Manila issued a travel warning for the southern Philippines on Monday. The Philippine government worked on damage control, calling the raid an isolated incident and assuring tourists the country was still safe.

The Abu Sayyaf group, which turned kidnapping of foreigners into a lucrative cottage industry, vowed Tuesday to kill all the hostages if the military attempts a rescue.

The statement from Abu Sabaya, one of the group's leaders, heightened concern for the hostages. Abu Sayyaf has killed captives in the past, including two teachers who were slain last year after the government declared war on the group.

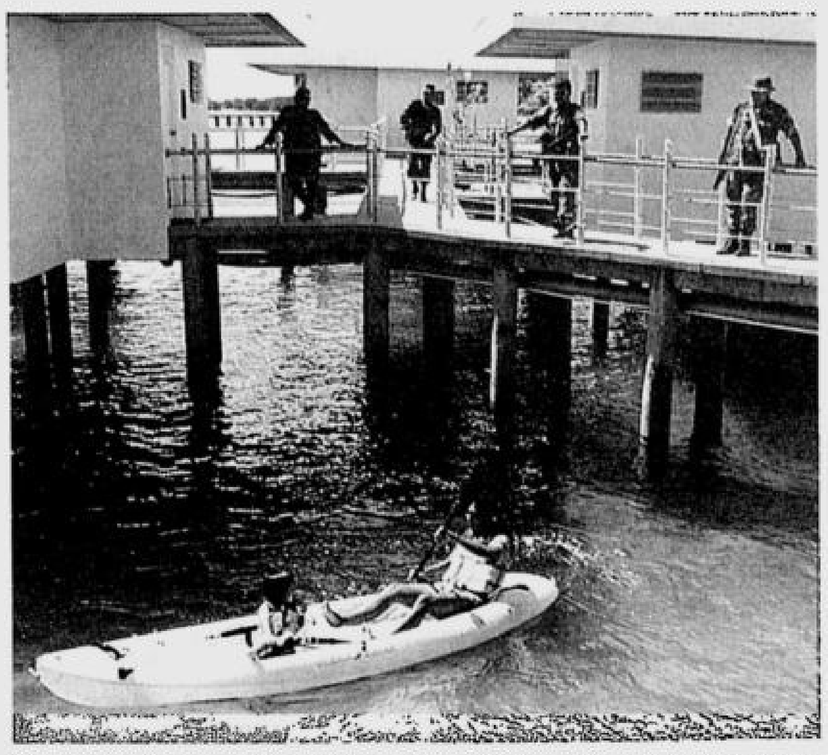
Thirteen months ago, the Abu Sayyaf raided a Malaysian island resort and abducted 10 foreign tourists and 11 resort workers. It later kidnapped several journalists covering the incident and other people in a series of high-profile incidents. Most were released, reportedly for multimillion-dollar ransoms.

In the month after last year's hostage taking, the government said tourism operators lost $1.2 million. The losses stretched throughout the year.

Last year, Vietnam, with 2.2 million visitors and relatively little tourism infrastructure, overtook the Philippines, with 2.1 million, in the region's tourism rankings for the first time.

Tourism hadn't fully recovered, particularly with the unrest and uncertainty from a popular uprising in January that ousted the president and a bloody attempt to storm Malacañang four weeks ago, when the latest blow came Sunday.

The government announced it would review security on island resorts. President Macapagal-Arroyo promised "bullets will rain" on the abductors unless they release their hostages. *AP*



TWO of the few remaining tourists at Dos Palmas take a kayak under the watchful eyes of soldiers.
VAL HANDUMON

Ramos sees bleak future for industry…

By TJ Burgonio

THE FUTURE for Philippine tourism looks bleak, after the abduction Sunday of three Americans and 17 Filipinos from an exclusive Palawan resort, former President Fidel Ramos said yesterday.

Ramos said former Chinese and US officials, including ex-President George Bush, and businessmen he met with abroad were not happy with the recent kidnapping incident pulled off by the extremist Abu Sayyaf.

"Of course their reaction was not very good," Ramos told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on his arrival at 11 a.m. from Hong Kong and Macau.

Ramos had gone to Hong Kong to attend the annual meeting of the Carlyle Group Advisory Board for Asia, a US multinational investment and management firm chaired by former President Bush and composed of former US and Asian leaders.

Ramos predicted that because of the kidnapping, the number of foreign tourists coming to the country would drop in the next months.

"We can expect a decline in tourists, especially those who favor beaches and maritime sports and those who would visit our farthest islands," he said.

In Macau, Ramos met with Chief Executive Edmund Ho and Macau Chamber of Commerce chair Dr. Stanley Ho.

Tourist arrivals in the first quarter of this year, prior to the kidnapping, totaled 501,171, down from 559,595 in the same period last year, according to Department of Tourism figures.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon blamed the dip in visitors on the spate of bombings that killed 18 people and wounded 100 in Metro Manila on Dec. 30 last year, and on the violent May 1 siege on Malacañang by supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

As early as then, Gordon said he had been warned by the World Trade Organization that the local tourism industry would suffer unless the country repaired its negative image abroad.

Not only tourism but business has been adversely affected by the violence in Mindanao with the Japanese government suspending all its projects on the island and stepping up warnings to resident Japanese nationals.

Consul Kiyoshi Suwa, Japanese consul in Davao, said Japanese-funded projects and programs all over Mindanao have been suspended because of security concerns following the attack on the Barcelo Pearl Farm in Davao del Sur and the kidnapping incident at the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan.

Suwa said the projects include those under the Japan International Cooperating Agency (Jica). In the Davao area, Jica has a huge stake in the Davao International Development Project (DIDP).

The Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs has advised their nationals to avoid Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon. In Davao City, the areas around Paquibato, Bunawan, Baguio, Calinan and Toril districts have been cited as "precaution areas." *With Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

… But Dick Gordon remains optimistic

By G. Cabacungan

TOURISM Secretary Richard Gordon remains upbeat on the prospects of the Philippine tourism industry despite a series of kidnappings and raids in an upscale beach resort in Palawan.

Gordon said he remained confident that the DOT would meet its 11.11 percent growth target of 2 million foreign tourism arrivals this year from 1.8 million last year.

Gordon noted that the country's tourism arrivals fell by "only" 200,000 in 2000 despite the Sipadan kidnapping last year. "It could take one or two years before we can get over this but we will survive," Gordon said. He said the country could have easily recovered last quarter the 200,000 foregone visitors in 1999 if not for the Labor Day attack on Malacañang by Estrada supporters..

He said Dos Palmas is just one of the country's 7,000-plus islands in the country and foreign tourists could still visit the rest of the country with more confidence. He said other countries have survived much worse incidents and the past and have remained as major tourist destinations.

"Even before these events happened, our people not only wrote but called every resort. In fact, we called Dos Palmas before May 24. All resorts are now beefing up their security, they should be able to provide themselves with adequate equipment that are properly supervised by the DOT so that they can adequately defend their communities," Gordon said.

In view of the government's limited resources, Gordon said the DOT was counting on the full cooperation of corporations and affluent businessmen to contribute funds and encouraging all Filipinos to report immediately any suspicious movements in their areas.

Gordon admitted there had been cancellations arising from these incidents that have filled up the screens and news space of foreign media. "I believe in the Filipino's ability to rise from every tragedy. We will overcome this."

He said the DOT's main strategy was to step up its promotion efforts by asking the private sector to take the initiative in promoting the Philippines as a tourist destination.

He said 1.2 million Japanese tourists visit Thailand versus the 360,000 who go to the Philippines even though Bangkok has its own share of coup d'etat and bombings. "The only difference is that Thailand has more resources poured into its tourism promotion efforts," Gordon said.

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OPINION

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Founding Chairman

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Blackout

EDITORIAL

THE CONTEXT of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's clampdown on news about the abduction of 20 people at Dos Palmas by the Abu Sayyaf is that it applies to military operations to rescue the hostages and crush the outlaws. The appeal for media cooperation in observing the news "blackout" was made both at the President's press conference and in a meeting with media executives and editors.

With the understanding that the blackout applies to operational aspects, the media should not expect the government and the security forces to reveal sensitive details of the offensive. As far as this aspect of secrecy is concerned, the President's appeal is reasonable. She has leveled with the press, and she has laid down the ground rules. The idea behind the news blackout is that the outlaws should not be tipped off about the details of the operations so that the lives of hostages will not be jeopardized and the terrorists can be neutralized.

Withholding of news involving military and police operations does translate into a curtailment of press freedom. Veteran editors and experienced reporters are familiar with the importance of temporarily withholding the broadcast or publication of news to avoid the use by criminals of prematurely disclosed information to escape police or military action. Our experience with the Abu Sayyaf abduction of 21 hostages in April last year provides ample evidence of the harmful consequences of untrammeled flow of information coming from different sources, highlighting the worst aspects of the principle of the "free market" of information.

The aspect of the blackout involving non-operational matters is, however, dicey. In which case, the judgment on whether to use or withhold information relating to developments on the abduction rests on the sense of responsibility of editors. In last year's abductions, the Abu Sayyaf manipulated the press to gain leverage in negotiations over their hostages and to raise their demands for ransom from governments or foreign parties.

This time, extortion might not yield exorbitant returns to the outlaws. The United States, three of whose citizens are hostages, have a tough policy against paying ransom. The Philippine government, which is strapped for cash, is in no position to negotiate the release of hostages in exchange for money. The families of the hostages might try other channels of negotiations but our lesson from the past is that ransom demands tend to escalate and can be very messy, without guarantee of release.

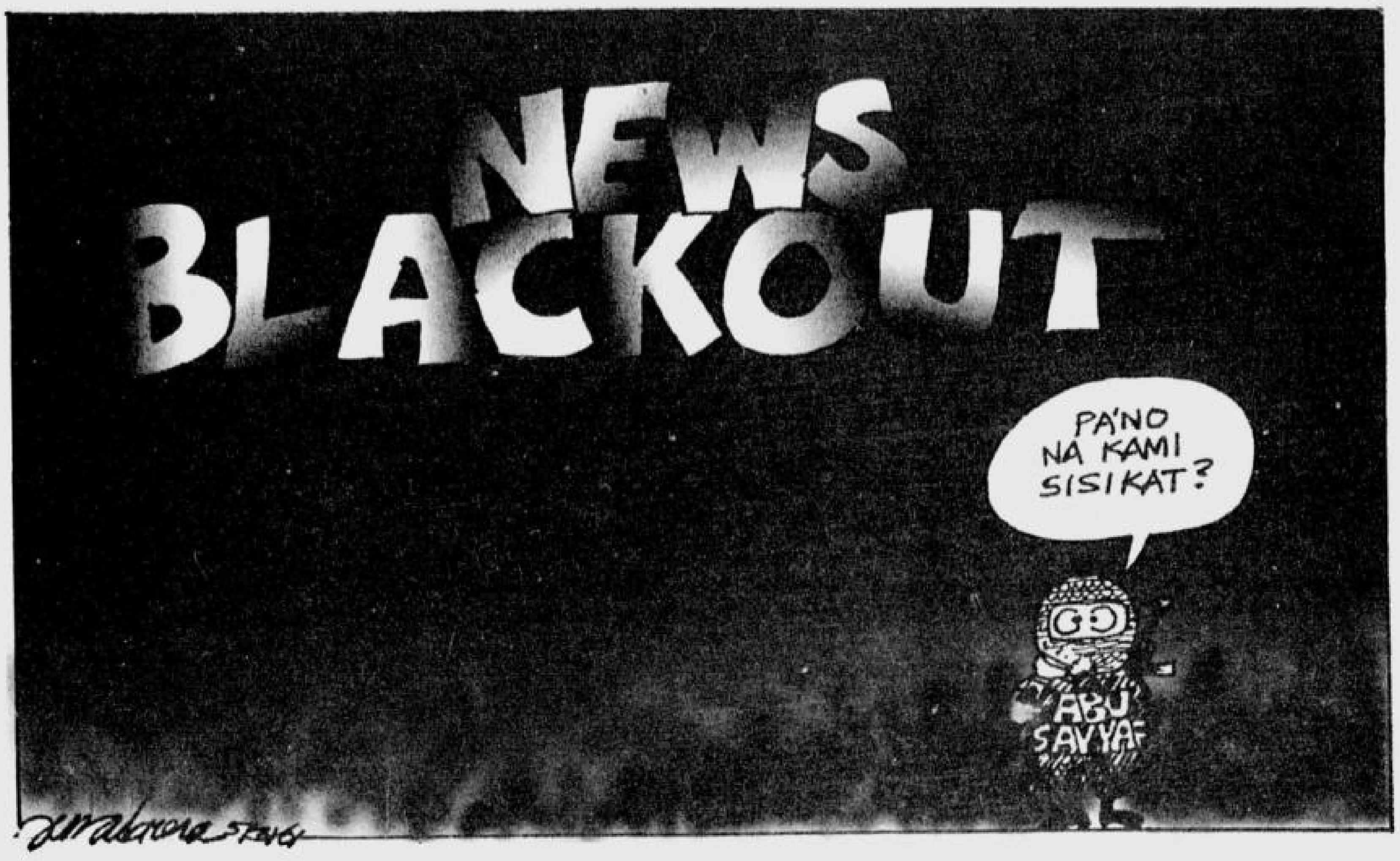
This time, the government is better able to deal with the bandits more coherently. The police and the army are not at odds over how to conduct rescue operations, unlike in last year's saga when the police and the military waged a very public war over how to crack down on the Abu Sayyaf.

The media like to have scoops, to be ahead in the center of action, often putting the lives of reporters at risk. But last year many journalists who crossed military lines to get the story first were themselves abducted for ransom, and their free-wheeling activities got in the way of military operations.

The primary concern in the second Abu Sayyaf saga is not getting exclusive reports on the spot but the safety of the hostages and the success of the operations against the bandit group. This is what the President meant when she appealed to the media for cooperation in observing the government's news blackout.

The Abu Sayyaf, or any terrorist for that matter, has learned how to use the press to increase their leverage in securing their demands. They like to be seen on television strutting around with their high-powered weapons to impress upon the audience their power of life and death over their victims and to intimidate governments to grant their demands. They use media as a propaganda tool to win monetary objectives, thinly disguised as political objectives.

There's a thin line between reporting legitimate information and being manipulated by terrorists. In a crisis situation where the flow of information can influence the success of military operations, we have, from experience, learned that regular briefings on the progress of operations help tremendously in keeping the media informed and decided judiciously what information to publish or broadcast.



Why not give taxpayers shares in new power firms?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

TODAY is the fourth and last day of the special session of Congress. The hated Omnibus Power Bill might have already been railroaded through Congress by the time you read this, in which case we've been had again. If it hasn't, then God must be helping us because the pro-administration legislators are ready to do anything—betray the people, throw their integrity and shame away, accept bribes, anything—in order to pass the bill which few of them understand.

The Department of Energy has issued a primer on the bill and Malacañang has paid for full-page advertisements trumpeting its virtues. But again, there are deceptions in both the primer and the advertisement. Nowhere is the most controversial provision even mentioned, much less discussed: the billion-dollar debts or "stranded costs" of the National Power Corp.

The Filipino taxpayers will pay for the $6.7-billion Napocor debts (the administration renamed them "stranded costs" in an attempt to deodorize them) while it sells our one and only power firm at a bargain price of only $4.5 billion, minus its debts, to rich private buyers. There is no way they can explain this onerous provision, or deodorize it. So they decided just to keep silent about it. That is how duplicitous the supporters of the power bill are.

Simply put, the situation is like this: A owes the bank a lot of money for which he has hocked his store. He wants to sell the store to B, including all its stocks, but B won't assume the store's bank debts. Instead, A wants C to pay the debts, although C has nothing to do with the deal at all. A gets the purchase money, C foots the bill, but B gets to own the store. How can anybody defend a deal like that?

Assuming, for the sake of argument, that it is imperative for the Napocor to be privatized but there would be no buyers if they have to absorb its debts, I have a suggestion that should make it less contemptible to those who would foot the bill: the taxpayers. It is this: give the taxpayers shares of stocks to the private power companies that would get to own the Napocor. That's only fair, *'di ba*? Why should the people pay for Napocor's debts and then somebody else gets to own and profit from it? The people should get something in return for their money. Under the power bill, they will get nothing although they will shell out $6.7 billion.

My suggestion is nothing new. Coconut farmers who paid the coconut levy have shares in the Coco Levy Fund. Subscribers of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. own shares in the phone firm, for which they get annual dividends and are entitled to vote in the election of the firm's board of directors. Why can't the people who will pay for obligations that should rightly be paid by Napocor's buyers not be given shares in the new companies? Why should the people bail them out only for other people get to own them?

If the people are partial owners of the new power firms, they will pay willingly because, they will rationalize, they own a piece of the company anyway and what they pay will go back to them in the form of dividends. And even if power rates rise, the people will pay without grumbling because the increases will go back to them. It is like the neighborhood *paluwagan*: borrowers don't mind the high interest rates on loans because they eventually benefit from them.

Besides, the people will look at those payments as investments and assets. The stock certificates can be sold in the stock market, or used as collaterals for loans. More important, electricity subscribers will be vigilant against those who steal electricity through jumpers or illegal connections. Because every kilowatt-hour of electricity stolen is so much money lost from their dividends.

This is such a simple solution, but the framers of the power bill never thought of it because they were thinking only of themselves. They don't care a bit for the people.

Does President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo really care for the people as she claims she does? Let's see.

* * *

In the deliberations and voting for the power bill, the two Osmeñas in the Senate, John and Serge, should be disqualified, or should voluntarily inhibit themselves. They have conflicts of interest. John is married to an Aboitiz and Serge is married to a Lopez. Two of the biggest beneficiaries of the bill are the Aboitiz and Lopez families, owners of generating plants and the biggest franchise holder of power distribution in Luzon, Meralco.

* * *

The thinking of the administration is that the only way to improve utility companies such as power, water and oil firms is to privatize them. False. There are many examples around the world that disprove such thinking. The most notable example is the Tennessee Valley Authority, which provides power to five states in the United States.

The TVA was built back in 1938 to provide hydroelectric power. It is owned and operated by the government and has the cheapest rates. Since 1938, American businessmen have tried many times to take over the TVA by having it privatized but the US Supreme Court foiled them each time. The TVA is still government-owned and still provides the cheapest power.

On the other side is the California power system. It used to be run by the state. But it was privatized in the same manner that we want our own Napocor privatized. In fact, our own power bill was copied from it.

Because of it, California now has a power shortage and rates have risen 300 percent. California now has rates even higher than our own supposedly very high rates.

Lessons learned

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

IF the Abu Sayyaf could be destroyed by pronouncements, it would be sheer unlamented history by now. Widows of its members would all be weeping in their tents; their children orphaned. Our nation's political and military leadership would be basking in the sunshine glow of public approval.

The reality is quite different. After the release or escape of all their foreign hostages from their last terroristic eruption in Malaysia, their solitary Filipino hostage still remains detained and forgotten many months later. The ransom funds provided by foreign governments and winked at by ours are funding new and more profitable adventures in locations ever more distant from Sulu and Basilan. It is not just their victims that they are holding hostage; it is the country.

The way to deal with such terrorists has been clear from the beginning. Terrorism, either here or abroad, is not new. And the required response to acts of terror is also clear. Above all, we need great patience. This problem has been decades in the making and will not be solved quickly. Quick fixes, like paying ransom, are engraved invitations to a new hell.

What are some of the lessons we have learned? Let us review these as we noted in a column 10 months ago:

- If at all possible, resolve the matter within the first few days. The longer the wait, the greater the risks, as hostages are split up or transferred to more secure hideouts. An early resolution is therefore cheaper (you are dealing with far fewer people), less complicated politically (the international propaganda and economic costs are not yet incalculable), and permits the use of a military option, if that is decided upon.

However, sometimes an early resolution just isn't possible and must be substituted with a policy of patience.

- A high-level negotiating team needs to be already in place if the decision to talk is made. Ultimately, decisions have to be made at the highest government levels. A political/military operations team needs to be ready, with clear policies, resources, and authority. Complex situations like this are far beyond the capability of local crisis bodies to resolve.
- Intelligence is vital. To assure this, we need to maintain close security/anti-terrorist ties with our neighbors Malaysia and Indonesia as well as with the United States. We need both human intelligence and signal intelligence to guide our steps.
- Shut up. Avoid talking to media. Appoint one spokesperson through whom all authorized information is passed. Tell everyone in and out of the government of the stakes involved and ask for their cooperation. It is particularly important to make certain that any disagreements or squabbles, inevitable in a high-tension situation like this, remain internal.
- Use the universally acknowledged system of police lines. Since lives are at stake, including those of members of the media, keep everyone without an official role in the negotiations outside a clearly established perimeter. Coordinate with top media management to ensure cooperation. Heavily fine or penalize violators. Use media pools whenever possible, minimizing the danger to reporters and cameramen while allowing them to get their stories. It might take time and effort to ensure cooperation, but it is essential to prevent the media anarchy that put lives at risk and complicate negotiations.
- Have principles in place. Don't pay ransom as this is a guarantee that there will be more kidnappings in the future. At the very least, say what we mean. Avoid "Animal Farm" speak. Send clear signals to the kidnappers. "No ransom" should be "no ransom." The sooner the basics are settled, the quicker an understanding can be reached.
- Avoid making firm commitments to visiting diplomats. Publicly agreeing to avoid the military option strengthens the kidnappers, who know we have no cards left to play. As a sovereign state, we must make clear that while the safety of the hostages is our first concern, the responsibility for decisions must remain ours. Let's not tie our own hands down. By giving up the stick, all you are left with are ever bigger carrots.

Similarly, avoid the claim that we can't stop foreign governments or individuals from doing what they like, including paying ransom. It makes a mockery of our sovereignty. No foreign government will do anything in our territory without our permission. It is better to give that permission openly than to make unbelievable and unsustainable claims.

- The operatives in the field must be backstopped at the highest levels of government with a committee, like Cluster E, accountable on a daily basis to the President for making recommendations on multiple aspects of the crisis: diplomatic, media, military, logistics, and so forth. This ensures "speaking with one voice," provides a clearing house to avoid mistakes, and guarantees that decisions are reached based upon a full range of advice.
- Terrorism must, in the end, not pay. Not even the safe release of current hostages is worth the price of even more hostages and killings of our soldiers and civilians in the future. At all costs, this principle must be upheld.

If and when the Armed Forces strike, they must strike swiftly, with superior intelligence, and with overwhelming strength. Or not at all. But use a surgeon's scalpel, not a butcher's cleaver.

- Finally, we simply need to spend more money on military equipment—fast patrol boats, communications, helicopters and patrol planes—and trained commando teams. The cost of this compared to our economic losses from terrorism is a trifle.

Balancing act for media

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada's lawyers can't make up their minds. First they sought a house arrest for him, then it was a "hospital arrest" and now it's a "resort arrest." When controversy erupted over the detention center at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, Estrada's lawyers shifted to a petition to the Sandiganbayan to allow him to be detained at his own resort in Tanay, Rizal, right next to Camp Capinpin, home of the Army's Second Infantry Division. Now, which is which.

I am quite familiar with this Estrada-owned resort since my husband once headed Camp Capinpin. It would be foolhardy to allow his detention there. For one thing, even though it's right next to the camp, it's wide open in the back posing a real security problem, especially from the New People's Army. Moreover, proximity to the camp could tempt some of Erap's followers and relatives to try to influence the military there to do something foolish. The best arrangement still is the VMMC for both his detention and trial.

* * *

The government has learned its lesson from the Abu Sayyaf kidnappings last year, when the bandit group got wide media mileage from every local and foreign journalist who descended on Basilan and Sulu in search of interviews, in the process disclosing military operations. Now the government has imposed a news blackout on the military operations. The President also met with media leaders and appealed to them not to give the kidnappers exposure as it would only "embolden" them. There seemed to be no serious objections to the news blackout on military operations, but the media leaders refused to commit to stop doing interviews with the bandit group, presumably in the interest of serving the news.

The President noted that the bandit leaders crave for "international acclaim." We all know that media exposure is a heady potion that can affect bandit leaders as much as our senators. Note, for instance, how Miriam Santiago was going bananas with her gun under the camera's glare. By the way, that's one newsmaker who should really be subjected to a news blackout.

* * *

News blackouts are resorted to by governments. One can recall, for instance, the blackout over the Cuban missile crisis in President Kennedy's time. There seems to be no problem in accepting this reality. The problem gets sticky when the media outlets themselves are able to get the news through their own resourcefulness, and in this age of cell phones this is not difficult. An enterprising media organization would doubtless not feel bound by news embargoes.

Ultimately the media are caught between two clashing concerns: delivering the news (and scooping their rivals) and serving the "freedom of expression" and upholding the "national interest." The media have traditionally been afraid and even paranoid of the latter phrase, as they realize that in the past this has been abused in the guise of protecting the "national interest." But national interest can be a very valid issue, such as when the government is waging an all-out war against the Abu Sayyaf. Then too, the media have also been requested by the families of some hostages to go slow on disclosing their personal circumstances, for understandable reasons.

In the end the media have to make a judgment and decide where they stand on these conflicting issues. They have to carefully examine their priorities and this is where patriotism, love of country and commitment to the truth come into play.

* * *

The Senate leadership is generally conceded to be a battle between incumbent Senate President Aquilino Pimentel and reelectionist Sen. Franklin Drilon, who's generally acknowledged to be the *manok* of the Angara-Cojuangco bloc as well as of a segment of Lakas. Drilon has the edge because he can draw votes from various factions.

In the House, the race for the speakership has become more interesting as more members have declared their interest in the position. The latest aspirants are Iloilo Representatives Raul Gonzalez and Boboy Syjuco. At a recent victory get-together of young House members, led by the "Spice Boys," at the residence of Navotas-Malabon Rep. Ricky Sandoval, his father, Palawan Rep. Vicente Sandoval, was also mentioned up as a contender for the top House post.

* * *

Former Speaker Joe de Venecia is acknowledged to be leading the pack, bolstered by his record in the House, his legendary prowess at consensus-building, his international reputation as Christian Democrat vice president and his perceived closeness to the President. His campaign leaders are Representatives Rolando Andaya Jr. and Ace Barbers. De Venecia himself has hinted that he has forged an alliance with the second biggest group, the Nationalist People's Coalition.

But apparently there's resistance to De Venecia among some people who argue that Congress needs a "new image" in the post-Edsa II era and that public acceptability should be major a criterion for the top post. De Venecia still nurses an image problem and he has to convince the citizens that three years of hibernation and a resounding defeat in 1998 have chastened him. "President Macapagal shouldn't just ram De Venecia down our throats," said one congressman, adding that "it's not enough na *akbay-akbayan lang kami ni* JDV." They point out that the Lakas party which De Venecia chairs is divided into three factions. Some lawmakers are insisting that the newly elected Pangasinan representative is like any other neophyte and should line up at the back.

* * *

There's talk about a group whose members are crossing party lines to endorse a Mindanaoan for a change like Surigao Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. On the other hand, the 20 Liberals are pushing for their president Florencio "Butch" Abad, but as Butch Pichay likes to kid his *tocayo*, Abad has only 9,000 votes in his native Batanes.

In the final analysis, however, as Pichay himself admits, the only vote that matters is that of President Macapagal. Here De Venecia appears to enjoy an edge as he has a closer relationship with Ms Macapagal than most of the other aspirants. Moreover, in the current political climate of uncertainty, Ms Macapagal needs to solidify her support base in the House, if she is to get crucial legislation passed. Tapping a master coalition builder becomes especially crucial if Drilon captures the upper chamber with the help of the opposition.

Some people suspect that the other aspirants realize the hopelessness of their quest, but *nagpapapresyo lang sila* to get good committees. Whatever it is, there are rumblings De Venecia can't afford to ignore.

Teaching

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE wrote me to say that while I've written about the poor over the past several months, what exactly can we do to educate them? What exactly can we do to make them think and act more rationally? What exactly can we do to lead them away from false prophets like Erap and Mike Velarde?

Well, I have some ideas about particular projects in this respect, and will write about them in future. But first things first. I think the whole thing begins with a change of attitude. As I see it, we need to develop three attitudes if we are at all to have a glimmer of a chance to succeed in this enterprise.

The first is a sense of urgency. I noticed during the last campaign that when the candidates were asked about their economic plans, they spoke as though we had all the time in the world to do something for the poor. Which kept me thinking about the very vivid Filipino saying, *"Aanhin pa ang damo kung patay na ang kabayo?"* That was what their plans amounted to: hay to a dead horse. We do not have all the time in the world to do something for the poor. We are under the gun. The explosion that was "Edsa III" and the bigger explosion that was the Mendiola riots clearly show so. The social volcano isn't about to explode, it has exploded. We all need to run for cover.

The old aid givers had a point when they gave milk and hard bread to elementary school kids in the most wretched spots of this country. You cannot teach anything to 7-year-olds who are hungry and malnourished. None of your lessons will sink in. I think it is the same principle with the poor in general. You cannot teach the poor anything when they are hungry and restive—or indeed when they are unbelievably angry. What this means is that we may not rely on the usual "trickle-down effects" to make the problem go away. Nor indeed may we rely on token poverty alleviation measures for it. What we need is direct and aggressive intervention to at least feed the people—never mind clothing them or putting a roof over their heads. If we need to subsidize, let us subsidize. Globalization, with its absolute faith in markets, will be hay to a dead horse if we do not first feed the poor.

The second attitude we need to develop is a sense of humility. To ask how you may educate the poor is to not be able to do it. It is to assume that we pretty much have all the answers or lessons, it is just a question of finding the right pedagogy, or teaching method, to get these answers or lessons across to them. I've said this many times, and I will continue to say it many more times, as it is a lesson we ourselves cannot learn sufficiently: before you can lead, you must follow. Before you can preach, you must listen. Before you can teach, you must learn. You cannot lead troops whose psychology you do not understand: you can never be sure they will be behind you when trouble comes. You cannot preach to a flock whose spiritual and even physical needs you do not understand. They will only snore in church, or smoke a cigarette outside. And you can never teach to a class unless you are willing to learn. The best teachers are always the best learners: they are those who learn as much from the students as the students learn from them.

We want to educate the masses, we must first educate ourselves about the masses. We want to teach the poor, we must first embroil ourselves in the lives of the poor. Most of us, I think, have seen one or two movies about teachers who triumphed over impossible odds and managed to teach a seemingly unteachable class. The titles that come to mind offhand are "Blackboard Jungle" (later made into "To Sir With Love": Sidney Poitier was the toughie in the first, he was the teacher in the second), "Dangerous Minds" and "Educating Rita." How did they succeed in their mission, despite being threatened by their students, who looked more like goons masquerading as students? By seeing the world from their eyes. From the drug-crazed eyes of those who live without hope in the ghettoes, from the bloodshot eyes of those who have seen too many deaths to care, from the soulless eyes of those who neither give nor expect anything from this world. And by seeing the world from their eyes learned what to teach and not just how to teach.

I know the desire to educate the masses is a well-meaning, and indeed lofty, one, but I still cringe every time I hear it phrased this way. There is something horrendously patronizing about it, as horrendously patronizing as Jaime Cardinal Sin's apology to the poor for having neglected them like a bad father. You can almost hear the poor saying, "Oh, but we can do quite well without you, thank you." You do not think of the poor as people who actually have something to say, and who are in fact desperately trying to say it in their distorted, aberrant and atavistic ways (how else can they express themselves, given our refusal to listen?), you will never educate them.

Only when we know what to teach can we think of how to teach it. The masses are teachable, the poor are educable. But they are so only in the language they recognize. Which brings me to the third change in attitude we need to make, which is the willingness to learn the language of the poor. That language you will find in the impeachment trial. It is not the language of law, it is not the language of finance, it is not the language of the head. It is the language of stories, it is the language of myth, it is the language of the heart.

What drew the masses or the poor to Edsa II—it was true people power, and not just elite power, as Time suggests—was that impeachment trial. And what specifically drew them to it was not the court brilliance or accounting savvy of the protagonists there, it was the sheer drama of the thing, with heroines like Emma Lim and Clarissa Ocampo battling ogres like Flaminiano and the Fortun brothers, with *bidas* like Joker Arroyo and Pablito and Arno Sanidad battling *contrabidas* like Juan Ponce-Enrile and Miriam Defensor-Santiago. Indeed, with "telenovelic" moments like Loren Legarda and Franklin Drilon bursting into tears and Tessie Oreta whooping it up in demonic frenzy. That impeachment trial, as I've said again and again, became more popular—no, more wondrously addictive—than "Rosalinda." Without the morality play that was that trial, there would have been no Edsa II.

The masses can be educated, the poor can be taught. But only if we allow them to teach us what they know.

* * *

Victor Ziga writes: "The 1987 election was for 24 senators, not 12. There were two losing candidates, but I was not one of them. I placed number 18 with over nine million votes. I topped in my own province and region, which I believe has not been surpassed to this day." The original correction was 22-2. I do not know why I wrote 10-2. Must have been the raucous revelry of the past week. My deepest apologies.

Teachers waiting to exhale

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

AT THE RECENT fellowship luncheon of the East-West Center Association (alumni and fellows) held at the new Ayala digs of the Philippine American Education Foundation, we had Education Secretary Raul Roco as speaker. I have heard Roco speak several times in the past and I can say that the guy's a great storyteller and would make a good classroom teacher. Why ever did he become a lawyer?

The nice thing about listening to Roco is that he does not make you feel you're listening to a speech. He tells stories. It was in that weekend gathering that he told tales about the plight of public school teachers and the absurd and ridiculous phenomena in the education department that have been their source of torment. And, of course, what he, secretary for the last four months, is doing about them.

While we were listening to Roco's true-to-life, four-hankie stories and anecdotes about the martyrdom of teachers, I wished he'd tell the same stories a thousand times to a thousand gatherings. I'd like people—those with young children especially—to panic. Then maybe things would change fast for the better.

You see, in my mind I have this recurring nightmare of a futuristic scenario that consists of a teacher-less world that is spawning an ignorant generation. That dreadful scenario comes about because of people's refusal to join the teaching profession because it is the most oppressive profession of all. Formal learning slows down and comes to an end. Civilization is at a standstill. That is my idea of doomsday, of Armageddon where evil triumphs.

I was therefore so pleased when the INQUIRER's Sunday Lifestyle section spent "Playtime" with Roco and came up with several pages of the interview that included off-the-cuff remarks and the same revelations he had made at the EWCA gathering. Reading "Playtime" was like listening to Roco again and instead of recounting to friends what one had heard the education boss say, one could just offer the May 27 issue of the INQUIRER and say, "Here, want to know more about contemporary Filipino martyrs?"

It is appalling to know that there are teachers who have a take-home pay of P2,007. That is the ghost remains of a gross salary of P14,000. That is because of so many deductions, that is because many teachers are heavily in debt, that is because the DECS is the biggest collection agency of the republic. It collects for 187 lenders, Roco revealed. How has it come to this? This department is a haven for bloodsuckers.

At the end of the month, there is hardly anything left of the teachers' pay. Because they don't get their pay on time, teachers have to borrow or engage in buy and sell. Interest eats up into what is left of their pay. So a teacher with so many deductions never gets to see the full amount. Isn't that pathetic—not being able to hold in one's hands even for a full minute the full salary and gaze upon it before one gives up almost all of it.

They never get to smell or see the color of their money. Take the case of the P3,000 clothing allowance. Roco said the teachers had been getting this in the form of textile to the delight of textile suppliers. So one can imagine the teachers' relief when they learned they'd be getting cash instead and be able to stretch the amount to include shoes, umbrellas, even panties perhaps.

Delay in pay lessens a teacher's pay because she/he has to borrow and pay interest. So to avoid delay, Roco said, check-free payroll is the solution. That way, the money goes directly to the teachers through ATMs. Choose the bank nearest you, Roco suggested. It need not be a government bank. And to avoid long queues in that designated bank, Roco stressed, use the Bancnet and Megalink systems.

"They're so innocent," Roco quipped, "they've never heard of Megalink and Bancnet." Well, public school teachers are perhaps more familiar with "five-six" than they are with the banking system.

And there's the blanket withholding tax that takes three years to reimburse. Why it takes that long is a mystery. Roco has called for a three-month moratorium on taxes so the teachers could finally exhale.

You don't know whether to laugh or cry when you learn that public school teachers are the most X-rayed people in this country. Well, if you're thinking tuberculosis you're not entirely wrong. Because many of the teachers live below the poverty line, they are vulnerable to communicable diseases and lung ailments. (Is it the chalk dust?) In fact, there is a Teacher's Pavilion at the Quezon Institute where tubercular teachers are confined. I have interviewed a few, but that's another story.

Poverty and being predisposed to catching TB is not the reason for the yearly X-rays for which every teacher has to pay P200, like it or not. Roco said he did not bother to find out how this overexposure to X-rays started. He just abolished the P200 X-rays and passed on the cost to Philhealth. Again, exhale.

I'm glad to know that books that used to cost P60 each have been reduced to as low as P25 or so by means of bidding. How come nobody tried to look into this before? And to think that teachers were made to pay for books that students lost. That meant more deduction.

You walk in any town, Roco mused, and you'll know a teacher when you see one. They dress differently, they have big bags, they have a way of combing their hair. I don't think he meant they looked distinguished. Maybe, distinct. About the big bags—they probably contain *polvoron* early in the morning and test papers late in the afternoon.

On June 4, the first day of school, I will specially remember my first-grade teacher who died, along with her husband who was also a teacher, in a vehicular accident. I remember the sound of her voice, her face. I was not quite 5 years old, Grade One, Section 2.

ABC of Philippine elections

YOUNGBLOOD

Nina Torcelino-Iszatt

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I TURNED one-year old as a Filipino last March. Having not yet reached kindergarten, my language skills are still rudimentary and I continue to struggle to communicate in Tagalog, Bicol or Bisaya, depending on where I am. Confusion is thus my general state, and my mistakes are a constant source of amusement for my friends. One time I returned to Manila, after spending one month in an Ilonggo speaking part of Mindanao, declaring, "*Nalibog na ako*," when what I wanted to say was, "*Nalilito ako*"—although coincidentally, I happened to be *nalibog* in Tagalog too, but that is another confused story!

Most of the time, however, I get the gist of what is being said. It only gets problematic when I am required to verbalize something before my *kausap* gets bored and politely suggests I try English.

Still after one year in the archipelago, I have adopted easily to the differences that I'm faced with, considering my 24 years of growing up in average suburbia, London. The grossly shocking gap between the elite minority and disfranchised majority still traumatizes but I find the immune periods slowly increasing. When I am in the province, I can happily deal with having a *kasama* for everything I do for at least a week before I freak out because, as my individualist culture dictates, I need my space. I have grown accustomed to the multiple scandals in political life (such as the National Power Corp. payola scam) that surface and are then washed away without a trace. I have experienced police violence up close at the State of the Nation Address protest rally last July (and no, developing countries do not have a monopoly on abusive police; I've witnessed the same at rallies in London). And I too had a walk-on part in the all-singing, all-dancing extravaganza of People Power II, the musical that ousted an ex-actor from the presidency. (Now Miss Alanis Morissette, that is ironic.)

Kaya, in terms of political exposure, *akala ko*, I graduated many months ago. So I was flabbergasted (how very British of me) to find myself back in pre-school at the start of the election campaign season, a naive child, wide-eyed and in awe of the momentous task of studying the intricacies of Philippine elections.

Technically, the elections should be pretty straightforward to comprehend. After all, despite the numerous seats being contested, there are but a few names to remember. But for me that's where the problem began: the governor was the wife of the congressman; their son was city mayor. (Next time she will run for Congress, and the son for governor.) The *kalaban* during the last elections was this year's running mate. This year he was Lakas, but the last time he was LAMMP. Confused? I was, and it had been explained to me in English! I'm used to a system where in the rare event that a member of parliament leaves their party for another, that borders on a political crisis.

Then there was the appearance of this somewhat motley crew who seemed to have their hearts set on polluting the visual landscape for the next few weeks: a disgraced ex-president's wife (the gall!); all his *trapo* cronies and allies (the arrogance!--Ma'am Miriam, since I only graduated from the University of London, does that make me a "lower life form" too?), countless actors (qualified to do what exactly?) and what appeared to be the entire family of an ex-dictator (no comment).

What perplexes me most is that these people will remain in power. Typical bewildered child that I am, now begin the questions. But why? How? I don't understand! Surely, this new administration is promoting good governance and political parties with comprehensive platforms. How do political dynasties and opportunistic affiliations fit this picture? And how is it possible to move forward and develop when politically we seem to be going round in circles? Circles, I'm sure aren't so bad when virtuous—but these? Most definitely vicious! Guns, gold and goons? It's just like the movies!

I had initially marveled at the high voter turnout: even in the provinces 85 percent was common, a sharp contrast to the 40 percent turnout during the last local elections in Britain. I was quickly reminded that here people are paid to vote, so they participate in elections!

"But this is the 21st century," the innocent in me protested. "There must be signs of progress. Somewhere." How easily satisfied is a child with an answer that makes perfect sense: the party-list system, of course. A system of proportional representation in which party-list representatives sit for a party that is elected to Congress on the basis of its electoral platform. Designed to promote a broad range of interests, particularly the "marginalized and underrepresented" sectors, this looked like the antidote to the *trapo*-style of politics that I had really had to see to believe.

So, there I was, feeling happy after a day's learning, secure in the knowledge that everything was right with the world.

If only! Being *makulit*, I started asking people in the barangays I was visiting which party-list party they had voted for. Most of them just looked at me blankly, so I began to explain.

Some were more enlightened than others. "Like Akbayan!" cried one farmer.

Yes! Can you name any others?

Silence.

My bubble truly burst when I learned how many party-list organizations were participating in the 2001 elections. If having 123 parties to choose from last time was confusing, this year there were 163 parties contending and, for some implausible reason, the list included big traditional parties, a military group (what?!) and representatives of big business—hardly "marginalized and underrepresented" sectors.

The party-list system is actually a very advanced electoral system. In Britain, despite the promise of more proportional representation, we are still burdened by the archaic and unfair system of "first-past the post" and voters are effectively limited to choosing among three large parties. The party-list system is a critical mechanism in strengthening party politics in the Philippines and establishing a transparent and efficient government so that all interests (not just the vested ones) are represented.

My first Filipino birthday wish *pala* was—well, two actually: that those *trapo* candidates would not be elected into office; and that all *genuine* party-list parties like Akbayan would perform well and make new politics a reality.

None of my large extended family voted for a party-list representative in the 1998 elections. This year they all understood the importance of their vote. And it took a pre-kinder to educate them!

Nina Torcelino-Iszatt, 26, acquired Filipino citizenship (she is half British) after moving to the Philippines last year.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

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Selective justice isn't justice

THE WIDESPREAD cheating during the last elections was bad enough. What's unacceptable were the killing which made a mockery of our being a Christian nation. This only shows that some candidates have demented minds and they are willing to kill just to win.

It leads one to suspect that the plunder case filed against a former president has prompted some, especially those who are drunk with power, to take more drastic measures to fortify their positions. For they persist in believing that moves to bring them to justice will fail as long as they are deeply entrenched in their position.

But they are wrong. Evading the law might have been easy during the old politics of patronage, but it will not work in the new politics of accountability. As Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said, winning a seat will not stop the government from pursuing those who violated the law.

Let us mark those words well. There must be some assurances that justice will be served for we are all still struck with disbelief that aside from the Marcos cases remaining unresolved, no cases have been filed against those who profited illegally during the Aquino and Ramos administrations.

We can't keep sweeping the dirt under the rug for the sake of some influential people. Selective justice isn't justice but just another kind of deception where the only ones that are hurt are the marginalized.

The worst possibility of course is that after having wisely filed a case against a former president (there is enough power in it to discourage any more monkey business in government and big business in the future), we will allow ourselves to slide back into our former despicable ways.

Let us get those who masterminded the killings to show to every one that Ate Glo meant it when she said there is going to be a change. No one wants an Edsa IV—but that's the danger of remaining ignorant.—**ERNESTO K. MAGTOTO, Las Piñas City**

Crushing burden of higher oil prices

I AM a working mother of two, doing the herculean task of budgeting for the family, taking care of the children and meeting the demands of NGO work. Recently while I was on my way home, I had to brace myself as I heard over the radio the news of an oil price hike by Caltex, Petron, Eastern Petroleum, Shell and Total.

If I remember right, only last February, oil companies took more than a month in rolling back their rates when the world crude oil price went down, claiming that they had to ascertain the monthly average price. *Bakit kapag magbababa ng presyo matagal, samantalang ora-orada kung magtaas?*

According to Raul Concepcion, a 29-centavo increase would have sufficed. The average 49-centavo increase is just too much for ordinary consumers like me. Of course, we know how the story goes whenever there is an oil price hike. Prices of commodities, fuel, transportation, electricity and other utilities will have to follow suit, and it has to happen at a time when school is just about to open.

I would like to appeal to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, a mother like me, to look more closely into the issue especially since she claims to be pro-poor. Maybe she could lobby for amendments in the oil deregulation law to protect the interest of consumers more than the profit-hungry corporations.

The same goes to the incoming senators and congressmen. *Magpakitang-gilas naman kayo sa taumbayang nagluklok sa inyo sa posisyon.*--**REGINA R. FRIAS, Blk 23 Lot 51, Karangalan Vill., Cainta, Rizal**

Gov't not paying contractors for finished projects

LETTERS

I WRITE in behalf of several contractors who are waiting for payment of infrastructure projects that have long been completed and are now being used by the public.

When President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over from the inept and graft-ridden Estrada administration, contractors heaved a collective sigh of relief, believing that finally there would now be an economic upturn and that they would be paid at last.

This was not meant to be. The first 100 days of the new administration passed and we are still in the same quandary as before, sitting on our asses and wondering how to pay our mounting obligations.

It seems that contractors always get a raw deal. Take my case. The barangay roads and school buildings had long been in use before I got paid and soon I realized that the profit and a sizeable chunk of the capital were already eaten up by interest payments, overhead costs and taxes. Conversely, I was a bit delayed in completing a barangay road in a far-off small island of Bohol and the government was quick in charging liquidated damages.

Then there is this building I constructed about a year ago. It is now being used to dispense justice but an injustice lies in the fact that I have not been paid a single centavo for the job. I have sent letters to the Department of Justice but these were simply tossed to the Department of Budget of Management allegedly because of funding problems.

What is the use of that certificate of availability of funds attached to the approved contract? I have written Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin about this and I am keeping my fingers crossed that it would merit a reply at least.

If I were a congressman, I would file a bill banning the use of buildings or projects not yet fully paid for by the government. Or better yet, I would file another bill mandating payment of interest for projects that remain unpaid.

The construction industry is in a sorry state. Much to our regret, we have had to terminate our workers. Poor, hungry and unemployed, most of them joined the multitude of the now infamous People Power III and the government has only itself to blame for this.—**GRACIANO N. LABAYOG, GNL Construction, 403 Kayumanggi St., Plainview, Mandaluyong City**

Ate Glo and Dubya

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

GLORIA Macapagal Arroyo and George W. (pronounced, by Bush in his Texan drawl, as Dubya) Bush were sworn in as Presidents on the same day, a few hours apart. The very day Ate Glo and Dubya were taking office, Filipinos were already passing on text messages observing how the two new Presidents were both children of ex-presidents and that both were succeeding womanizers: Bill Clinton in the United States and Joseph Estrada in the Philippines.

There was another similarity between the two but I guess it couldn't be crammed into the text message. Both Bush and Ms Macapagal assumed office amid controversy: Bush because of tightly contested election counts and Ms Macapagal because of charges that she came into power through a coup of sorts, and that she wasn't the people's choice, even among those who participated in People Power II.

Again, over the last few months, the two Presidents have shown striking similarities—this time in their style of governance. Both seem to have forgotten the controversies surrounding their mandate to govern, and seem unable to step down from their pedestals. Even more dangerously, both have chosen to pander to a small segment of the political forces that put them into power.

Bush campaigned for the presidency on a platform of "compassionate conservatism," claiming he would not be as hard-line as other conservative Republicans. Since he's taken office, however, Bush has pursued extremely right-wing policies, mainly responding to the demands of big business and the religious Right.

Bush has triggered a new arms race with plans for a costly missile defense shield project, dubbed by critics as "Son of Star Wars." Bush has also pursued very unpopular policies in relation to the environment, prompting Sen. Barbara Boxer to accuse him of having declared war on the environment. Early in his term, he announced that the United States would not accede to the Kyoto accord, an international agreement that calls for a reduction of greenhouse emissions.

His reasons? There was not enough scientific proof that these emissions were causing global warming and, well (said almost incidentally), the proposed reductions wasn't going to be good for American business. On the domestic front, his response to an energy crisis has been to order new oil drilling in arctic wilderness preserve areas instead of strengthening energy conservation programs.

There are many other areas—from education to civil rights—where Bush has come under fire, but it is his self-righteousness that seems to be most offensive. Bush likes to present himself as a morally upright Christian but an editorial in the British newspaper Guardian asks: "What is remotely moral about the systematic rollback of industrial, business and environmental safeguards?" The same editorial proposes that Bush's actions "proceed not from faith and principle but from arrogance and ignorance."

If Ms Macapagal's wake-up call was Edsa III and the siege of Mendiola, Bush just had his in the form of a one-man coup. Last week Sen. James Jeffords of Vermont left the Republican Party and effectively tilted the balance in the US Senate, shifting voting power to the Democrats. Party-switching is rare in the United States so Jeffords' move was considered revolutionary. Moreover, unlike in the Philippines, congressional votes in the United States generally follow party lines, with sharp differences in the Democratic and Republican parties' positions about foreign policy, economics and social issues. Jeffords' defection now jeopardizes Bush's conservative legislative agenda as well as his plans to appoint more conservatives to the judiciary.

There is one area where Bush comes through as a hybrid of Ms Macapagal and Erap. Like Ms Macapagal, Bush is fond of dropping God-and-country platitudes that, unfortunately, often come through as contrived and vapid. In addition, Bush has also become notorious for what writer Jacob Weisberg describes as "wandering nouns, bizarre verbs and convoluted tenses," which makes him more similar to Erap. Samples of "Bushisms" which Weisberg has compiled into a book: "You teach a child to read and he or her will be able to pass a literacy test" and "I hope the ambitious realize that they are more likely to succeed with success as opposed to failure."

There are many more Bushisms that make Erap and his "eraptions" look wise. At a recent press conference in Canada, Bush said he would not entertain any questions, "neither in French nor English nor in Mexican."

I cite the Bushisms to emphasize that in spite of Bush, the United States is stable enough to survive, maybe even to move forward. While Ms Macapagal may seem brighter and more discerning than Bush (am I using a bad baseline?), the Philippines just can't afford any more of sloppy governance.

As presidential children, Dubya and Ate Glo probably got special treatment, but as Presidents, they will have to learn they can't always get their way. A bit more of presidential humility, sincerity and a willingness to listen, and we just might be able to get the country running again.

* * *

Need a break from Kuya Dubya and Ate Glo? Grace Nono and friends will do a special "Chanting and Healing" concert at Bistro 70s tonight, starting at 9. (Take the "healing" part with a grain of salt. Maybe the smokers can be kinder considering it's Anti-Tobacco Day today?) The concert should end about midnight or 1, after which you can move down the street to Freedom Bar to catch Session Road, a young and talented band. (Yes, they're from Baguio and if you don't catch them tonight there will be other regular performances every other Thursday night.) Bistro 70s and Freedom Bar are both on Anonas Street in Project 3, Quezon City.

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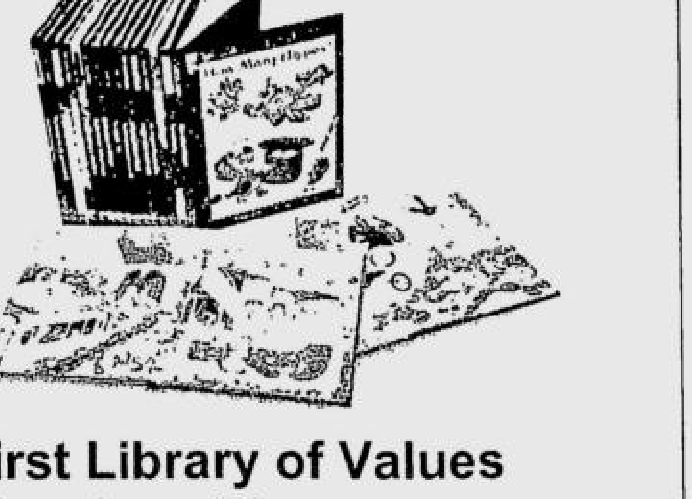

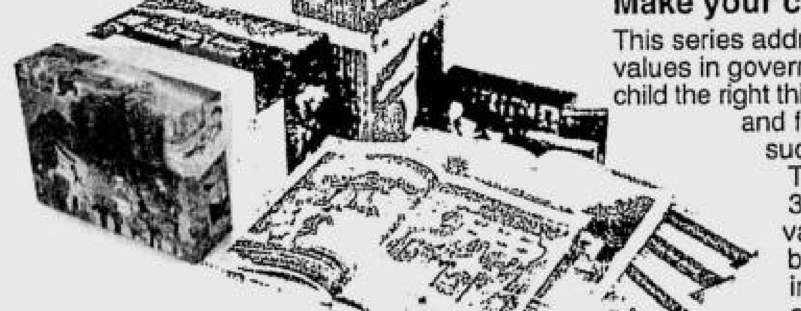

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The WORLD

Impeachment vote on Wahid sure to pass

JAKARTA—A vote ordering the impeachment of President Abdurrahman Wahid looked certain to be passed by Indonesia's Parliament on Wednesday after its two largest parties, representing a majority of lawmakers, formally backed the move in a debate.

In speeches to Parliament, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle and the Golkar Party, both demanded the higher People's Consultative Assembly go into a special session and decide Wahid's fate.

The move could see him swept from office by August.

Combined, the two parties hold 273 seats in the 500-member Parliament.

A vote on the matter is to be held later Wednesday after five more factions in the legislature formally state their positions. Most have already publicly come out against Wahid.

The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, the legislature's largest single bloc, demanded Wahid be made accountable for mismanaging the affairs of the nation and even encouraging its break-up.

"He said there will be national disintegration if he is ousted. This is not what a president should do. He should protect the citizens and not encourage separatism," said Sophan Sophian, a spokesperson for the party, which is led by Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri. If Wahid is forced out or quits, she will replace him.

This year, Parliament has issued two censures against Wahid over corruption allegations and incompetence.

Evita Asmalda, a spokesperson for Golkar, the party of former dictator Suharto, told Parliament Wahid had ignored the latest censure that it passed in April and should face the consequences.

Wahid has consistently challenged the validity of the moves against him, but has stopped short of making good a threat to dissolve the legislature.

He did not attend the session, but instead hosted a meeting of the leaders from several developing nations.

However, in a letter read to parliament he rejected the earlier reprimands, which he said "failed to specify what pledge of office has been violated" by him.

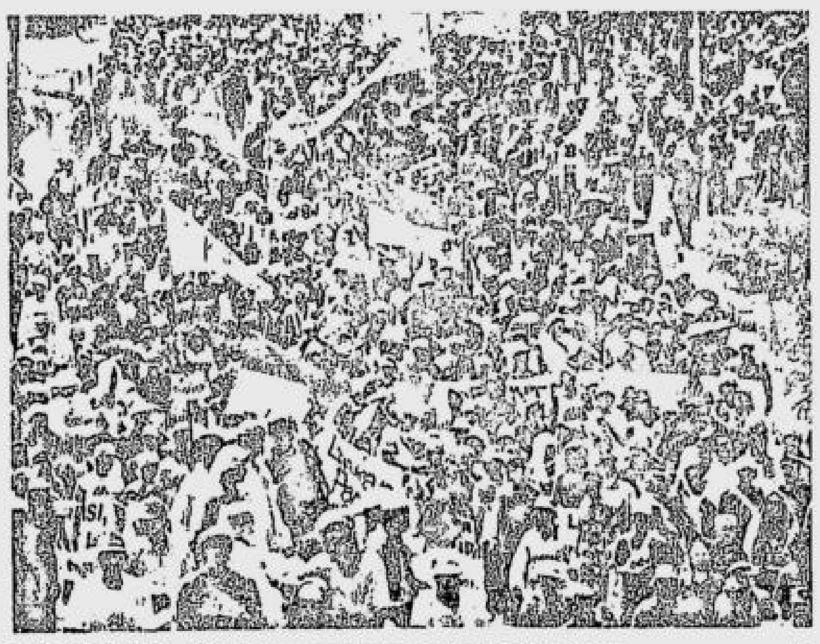
Lawmakers also received a report from prosecutors who have cleared Wahid of any legal wrongdoing in two graft scandals. Many said, though, they would ignore those findings as Wahid's fate was a matter of politics rather than criminal law.

Wahid has repeatedly warned that his ouster could trigger violence and in the past three days thousands of his supporters have rampaged through his home province of East Java, where he is revered as an Islamic holy man.

The mobs have attacked and burned the offices of his political opponents and destroyed churches and mosques. They also blocked roads and burned tires.

The military deployed yesterday some 600 paratroopers in the town of Pasuruan, the site of the worst violence. Troops fired warning shots, eventually dispersing the crowds.

In Jakarta about 4,000 Wahid supporters peacefully marched from his presidential palace on their way to the Parliament. *AP*



THOUSANDS of Wahid supporters march to Parliament. AP

Red Army disbands, seeks legal status

TOKYO—The Japanese Red Army, a revolutionary group responsible for terrorist massacres in Israel and Italy, will disband nearly four decades after it was formed, regrouping as a "legal" organization, newspapers reported yesterday.

Fusako Shigenobu, the Red Army's founder who was arrested last November in Japan after more than 25 years on the run, ordered the dissolution, the group said in a statement faxed to the Yomiuri newspaper, Japan's largest daily.

"This will be the last statement from the Japanese Red Army," the newspaper quoted a Red Army press release as saying.

The mass-circulation Asahi newspaper carried a similar report.

In a letter sent from jail, Shigenobu, 55, reportedly informed her followers last month that she would break up the group to try to pursue its cause through legal channels.

The Red Army said that the dwindling number of supporters and the loss of many senior personnel—who either have abandoned or been arrested in recent years—forced its decision.

"We will promote ourselves under a different name next year," Japan's Kyodo News agency quoted the group's statement as saying.

The National Police Agency refused to comment on the report.

The dissolution brings to an end the Japanese Red Army's campaign to foment a worldwide communist revolution, which began when the group formed in Lebanon in the late 1960s.

The Red Army carried out a string of high-profile terrorist attacks in the 1970s and 1980s, including a 1972 machine-gun and grenade assault on the international airport outside Tel Aviv, Israel, that killed 24 people and injured 80. Shigenobu's husband died in the counterfire.

In 1988, the group bombed a US officers club in Naples, killing five people. *AP*

Japanese cultist meted out life term

TOKYO—A former member of the Aum Supreme Truth cult was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Tokyo court yesterday for crimes including taking part in a deadly 1994 nerve-gas attack.

The Tokyo District Court sentenced Noboru Nakamura, 34, for murder, conspiracy to murder, attempted murder, abduction leading to death, and illegally disposing of a body.

Prosecutors had demanded the death penalty.

Nakamura was found guilty of conspiring with Shoko Asahara, 46, AUM's founder and guru whose real name is Chizuo Matsumoto, over the sarin gas attack on June 27, 1994 in the city of Matsumoto, central Japan.

The doomsday cult released the Nazi-invented Sarin gas outside an apartment block housing judges in the city.

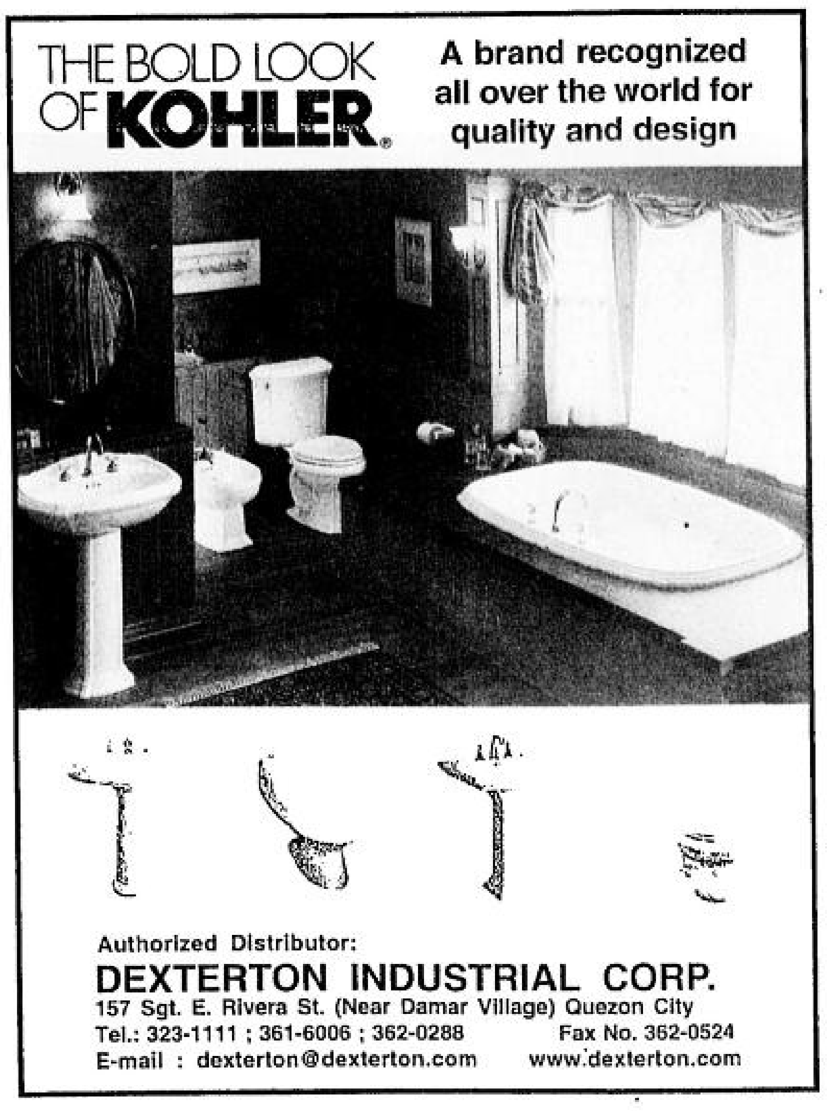
The fumes killed seven people and temporarily affected 144 others, some seriously.

It was a horrific curtain-raiser to the infamous March 1995 gassing of Tokyo's subway by the same cult, which killed 12 people and injured thousands of other rush-hour passengers.

"The defendant's criminal responsibility is grave as the Matsumoto sarin case was institutionally carried out under the supervision of (Chizuo) Matsumoto, which is anti-social and vicious," said Judge Toshio Nagai.

"The defendant has not expressed any remorse directly to the victims' families," he added in passing sentence. But the panel of three judges decided against condemning him to hang because Nakamura's "participation remained partial," Nagai said. *AP*

This school opening,
It's not only junior who's getting his bags full.
THE LANDMARK
SUPERMART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Embassy bombings trial enters death penalty phase

NEW YORK—Calling guilty verdicts against four men implicated in the bombings of US embassies in Africa "a triumph for world justice," prosecutors must now try to convince a jury why two of the men should be put to death.

The same panel that convicted the four accused followers of Osama bin Laden will decide the death penalty part of the case, which was to begin Wednesday in federal court in Manhattan.

In Kabul, Afghanistan's ruling Taliban said the convictions were "unfair" and vowed never to hand over Bin Laden, accused by the United States of masterminding the attacks.

"He is a great holy warrior of Islam and a great benefactor of the Afghan people," Abdul Anan Himat, a senior official at the Taliban information ministry, said of Bin Laden, who remains in hiding in Afghanistan.

"We won't hand him over to America under any circumstances. It is our stated policy," Himat told The Associated Press.

Four men were found guilty Tuesday of a global conspiracy to murder Americans, including the 1998 bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 224 people—201 Kenyans, 12 Americans and 11 other Africans—and injured thousands of others in a hail of rubble and shattered glass.

The verdicts capped three months of testimony and 12 days of deliberations as jurors meticulously worked on the daunting task of completing the 61-page, 302-count verdict. The four men were convicted of all 302 counts. Two could be sentenced to death, while the others face a maximum of life in prison.

"Taking into account what these men have done, they should have to pay," said Adadi Rajabu, director of criminal investigations for Tanzania, who headed his nation's investigation of the bombing.

"They should be hanged."

The four convicted were Wadih El-Hage, 40, a naturalized US citizen born in Lebanon; Mohamed Sadeek Odeh, 36, of Jordan; Mohamed Rashed Daoud Al-'Owhali, 24, of Saudi Arabia; and Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, 27, of Tanzania.

Lawyers for Al-'Owhali and Khamis Mohamed—who face the death penalty—have admitted their clients were involved in the bombings.

But they have argued that their roles were minimal compared to other defendants who will not face death.

Defense lawyers have signaled they plan to portray Mohamed as a mere foot soldier in the bomb conspiracy who is sorry about its outcome. By contrast, jurors will hear that Al-'Owhali killed in defense of fellow Muslims he felt were under siege by the US military.

Prosecutors were expected to call maimed survivors of the blasts to the witness stand and display graphic crime scene photos—evidence the defense unsuccessfully fought to have excluded.

Ellen Bomer was blinded by the terrorist blast in Kenya, and she never saw the men responsible for her loss. But the sound of their convictions was welcome news.

"It was the sound I wanted to hear," said Bomer. "I felt like standing up and singing out Handel's 'Messiah'—'Alleluia, alleluia.'"

The defendants showed little reaction as the verdicts were announced. Odeh, who faces life in prison along with El-Hage, took notes.

US Attorney Mary Jo White called Tuesday's verdicts "a triumph for world justice and for world unity in combating international terrorism."

In Nairobi, Kenya, some victims of the bombing said while they were happy with the verdicts, they lived in fear that terrorists may strike again.

"My suggestion is that they should be held for some time and they should give us more information about other terrorists, because we can be bombed again any minute," said Grace Biegon, 37, whose body is covered with scars from the Aug. 7 1998 bombing in downtown Nairobi.

Hours after the verdicts, the US state department urged Americans overseas to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take steps to increase their security awareness.

The statement was a reaffirmation of a May 11 warning that American citizens abroad may be the target of a terrorist threat from extremist groups with links to Bin Laden's Al Qaida organization.

It said the US government was not aware of any specific threat in response to the verdicts in the New York trial.

In the first phase of the trial, jurors heard FBI testimony that Al-'Owhali confessed to riding in a bomb-laden truck to the Embassy in Kenya, and tossing stun grenades to distract guards. The FBI said Mohamed helped grind TNT for the bomb in Tanzania before loading the bomb truck, seeing it off and praying it would succeed.

In court papers, Mohamed's attorneys said he should be spared death for giving the FBI "a complete and truthful statement of his role," acting "out of sincere religious belief," being remorseful, and "being improperly removed from South Africa" where he was arrested.

Lawyers for Al-'Owhali have said they plan to show he was "exposed to teachings and materials which promoted 'jihad' and martyrdom at an early age." The defendant believed the bombings were staged to prevent "acts of genocide," like the killings of Iraqi women and children in US air raids, papers said.

The verdicts set the stage for more trials: Six other defendants charged with conspiracy are in custody. Thirteen more are still at large, including Bin Laden. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

2 activists freed

KUALA LUMPUR—In a major victory for a group of jailed Malaysian opposition figures, a judge yesterday ordered the release of two anti-government activists who have been jailed for seven weeks without trial, and criticized police for failing to justify their arrests. The ruling has implications for eight other anti-government figures who were arrested in a police crackdown last month, which the opposition claims was ordered by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's government to stifle dissent. *AP*

Day of judgment

PARIS—Former French foreign Minister Roland Dumas and six others were set to be judged by a Paris court on Wednesday for their role in one of the biggest corruption scandals in France in recent years. Dumas, his ex-mistress Christine Deviers-Joncour, former Elf chair Loik Le Floch-Prigent and the four other accused face prison sentences and fines on charges relating to the misappropriation of funds from the former state-owned oil giant Elf Aquitaine. All pleaded not guilty during the trial, which has transfixed the public with its heady mix of sex, power and money. *AFP*

Ceasefire rejected

JERUSALEM—The Palestinians and Israelis were set to hold a further round of security talks Wednesday after a first meeting made little progress and another day of bitter Middle East violence ended with six dead. The second meeting on the security situation in the Gaza Strip is due to take place on Wednesday, according to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's spokesperson, who expressed the hope that these meetings "will result in a ceasefire and a halt to the violence from the Palestinian side." The meetings follow two rounds of talks held by US special Mideast envoy William Burns with both Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on the violence that has caused 575 deaths since the end of September. *AFP*

Wary over defense plan

BUDAPEST—The United States failed Tuesday to win its European allies in Nato over to its plans for a missile defense system, receiving only a cautious reaction and a request that consultations continue. But US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who presented the missile defense proposal at a meeting in Budapest of Nato's top policy-making body, insisted Washington would succeed in pressing its case for a missile defense system. He made the assertation after the 19 Nato foreign ministers issued a joint statement that welcomed US consultations on its plans but was otherwise guarded on the details and the source of threats which might justify the missile defense system. *AFP*

'Legacy of distrust'

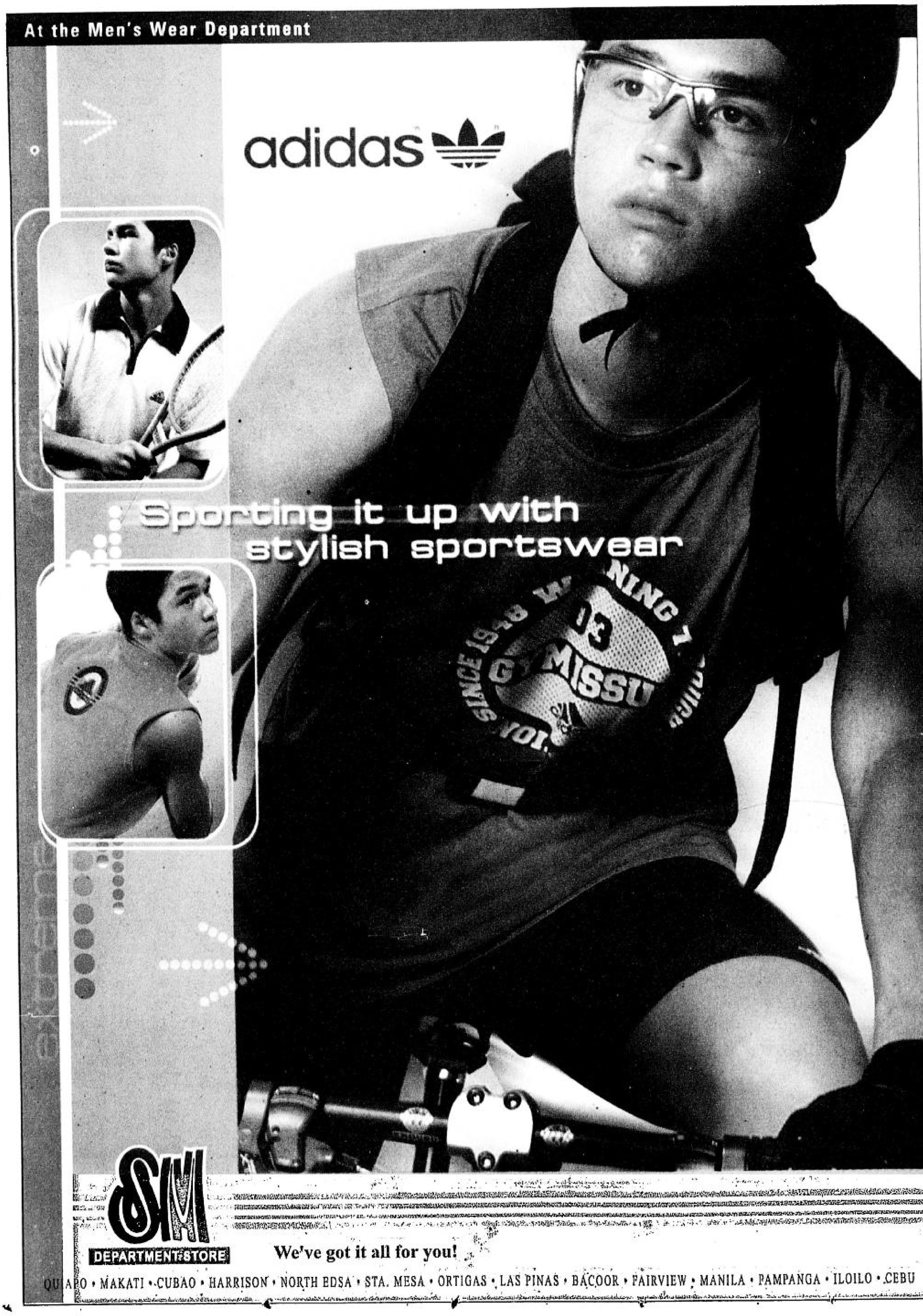
ISLAMABAD—Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf on Tuesday accepted an offer of talks with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to "overcome the legacy of distrust" between the South Asian rivals. The Pakistani foreign ministry said Musharraf's reply to Vajpayee's invitation to a summit meeting was delivered to Indian Foreign Secretary Chokila Iyer in New Delhi on Tuesday. "I accept your invitation to me and my wife to visit India, with great pleasure," Musharraf wrote in his reply *AFP*

Attempted coup

BANGUI—The Central African Republic's presidency early Wednesday accused former head of state Andre Kolingba of being behind an attempted coup against President Ange-Felix Patasse. "The attack overnight Sunday-Monday on President Patasse's residence by a heavily-armed group of assailants was a coup d'etat prepared and organized by General Andre Kolingba," presidential spokesperson Prosper Ndouba said in a statement. *AFP*

Textbook issue

TOKYO—South Korean President Kim Dae-jung has cautioned Japan to not risk letting a row over school textbooks damage relations between the two countries. In a letter to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Kim said the neighbors had made notable progress. But he added that "it would be very regrettable if these good Japan-South Korean relations were harmed because of the history textbook problem." *AP*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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

1,400 American troops arriving for war games

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT, Zambales—At least 1,424 American Marines and Navy men are arriving here Thursday (May 31) for two Visiting Forces Agreement-related military exercises but their presence does not have anything to do with pursuit operations against Abu Sayyaf bandits who abducted three Americans in Palawan on Sunday.

"Their arrival is not connected with the operations of the Philippine government against the Abu Sayyaf even considering that three Americans were taken hostage," Elmer Cato, spokesman of the Presidential Commission on the VFA (VFACOM), told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The Mutual Defense Board of the Philippines and the American government approved last year the conduct of the Cooperation Afloat Readiness Training (Carat-01) and the Pandagat, Panlupa at Panghimpapawid (Palah-01) exercises, Cato said.

According to Cato, Carat-01 and Palah-01 will be the fourth and fifth of 18 joint military exercises scheduled this year.

At least 1,400 US troops and 1,175 Philippine soldiers are participating in Carat-01 which will be held in Subic and San Antonio towns in Zambales, and Ternate in Cavite from June 1 to 11.

The US troops are arriving on board the landing ship USS Rushmore, the warships USS Kurts and USS Wadsworth, the salvage vessel USS Safeguard and the EP-3 Orion aircraft, Cato said.

He said 24 Sea, Air and Land Services (SEALS) forces from the US will join 16 of their Filipino counterparts in Palah-01, this year's first live fire exercises scheduled June 12-30 in this freeport and Subic.

The live firing, which is set to take place less than a year after the Toledo blast that killed two boys, will be held under stringent conditions, Cato said.

The Philippine Navy, according to him, agreed to comply with the guidelines issued by the VFA Commission after the Toledo incident.

Civilians, he said, will be warned not to stray in the firing site while an explosive ordnance disposal team will be assigned to account for all live ammunition and to retrieve and dispose of spent and live shells.

On Wednesday, at least 139 US Marines participating in last month's Balikatan-01 at the Clark Special Economic Zone left for Okinawa, Japan.

Twelve US planes—four F-18 Hornet fighter planes, four KC-130 Hercules and four CH53E Super Stallions—have been seen hovering over Palawan since Sunday.

Cato said the aircraft were not there to help pursue Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"Before heading back to Okinawa, they had engagements in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. From Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia), they were set to refuel in Puerto Princesa (Palawan) on Monday before they headed back to Clark," he said. *Tonette Orejas, Jun Malig and Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Incoming gov warned vs coal-fired plant

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—About 200 environmentalists dumped two dozen sacks of charcoal in front of the Provincial Administrator Center (PCA) yesterday to warn incoming officials against supporting the proposed construction of a coal-fired power plant in Pulupandan town, 31 kilometers south of this city.

"If you don't want it in your backyard, don't dump it in ours," said Ella Jacildo, head of the People of Pulupandan Against the Coal Fired Power Plant.

Red Constantino, Greenpeace energy campaigner, said if the new set of provincial officials allow the coal plant, it was tantamount to ignoring the voice of the people.

"We will not just watch and wait, we will make sure the coal plant project is withdrawn," he said.

A new governor will sit at the helm of the provincial government after the term of outgoing Gov. Rafael Coscolluela expires on June 30.

Governor-elect Joseph Marañon, however, has not made a stand on the plant, saying he will study the issue first.

Some Greenpeace members wearing dust masks unfurled two banners from the PAC rooftop and canopy demanding clean energy and the need to "Save Pulupandan."

About 200 Pulupandan residents, including young children, also carried placards, streamers and flaglets that said "no to coal."

2 Chinoy scions killed inside store

By Jhunnex Napallacan
and Kathy I. Navarro
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Two scions of a wealthy Chinese-Filipino family here were brutally killed inside their hardware showroom on Escario Street about 5 p.m. on Tuesday.

John Clement Go, 20, suffered a deep cut in the neck that almost severed his head. His cousin, Brian Go, 28, was strangled to death.

The victims were sons of businessmen, brothers Clement and Edmund Go, who are reportedly close to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

A close friend said Brian, the son of Edmund, had just arrived from the United States and was supposed to meet his fiancée from Canada here yesterday.

John was Clement's only son. His sisters are Cathy, 16 and Karen, 12 who were inside the store when the killing took place.

Two employees of the Go family identified Rufino Alacre, alias Loloy, as one of those who killed the cousins inside the family-owned Filmon Hardware.

Alacre worked as a forklift operator of the Go family from 1997 to last year, said Senior Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Cebu City police office director.

He said Alacre was also tagged as the one who tried to kill Lloyd Carampatan, the lone witness in a murder case involving a policeman.

Alacre and a companion allegedly went inside Filmon Hardware about 5:15 p.m. on Monday.

Police said the intruders immediately closed the store's glass door and threatened to kill Brian, John, Cathy, Karen and store worker Elizer Gacasan, 26, who were inside the store.

The suspects cut the store's telephone lines and asked money from Brian who gave them P1,000. Irked, the suspects demanded for more.

When they refused, the suspects hogtied the five victims and placed them in different areas of the store.

Gacasan said one of the suspects suddenly slashed the neck of John with a hunting knife. The suspects then strangled Brian Go and hit his back with a hard object, she added.

Brian was pronounced dead on arrival at the Chong Hua Hospital Tuesday night.

After two hours, the suspects left on board Brian's car, taking with them Karen. The girl, who was still tied, was found inside the car, which was abandoned by the suspects near the Tanchan Servitek along Capitol Site, just a few meters from the hardware.

Karen suffered bruises and was taken to the hospital. Her sister Cathy was allegedly beaten and remained in a state of shock.

Lapinid, however, said robbery might not just be the only motive of the suspects, noting the "gruesome" manner in which the victims were killed.

Traps laid out for NPA rebels

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Army soldiers and policemen in Tarlac and Nueva Ecija are in hot pursuit of 40 New People's Army rebels following two separate encounters that killed 10 rebels and wounded three soldiers on Monday.

Dragnets have been laid to trap the fleeing guerrillas, the Army's Northern Luzon Command and the Central Luzon police said in separate statements released here yesterday.

Chief Supt. Enrique Galang Jr., regional police chief, said government troops had "scored big against the local communist rebels" in Monday's clashes that occurred as the Macapagal administration and the National Democratic Front held peace negotiations.

Members of the Army's 69th Infantry Battalion and San Jose police killed nine rebels and captured three others during a gunfight that lasted six hours in Sitio Baag in Barangay Iba in San Jose town.

Police identified only four of the nine slain rebels. They were Oscar Estrada alias Poto or Uban, a certain Ka Emma, Marcelino de la Cruz and Johnny Daguio alias Ka Jack.

The bodies of the nine rebels were taken to the Enriquez funeral homes in Tarlac City. *Tonette Orejas and Ronald Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Lawyers sue gov, wife

ANGELES CITY—The number 13 again proved to be unlucky for Gov. Manuel Lapid after his own lawyer sued him for his failure to pay legal fees amounting to P845,493 since 1995.

The Panlilio Paras and Timbol law office, represented by its managing partner, lawyer Augusto Panlilio, filed the case against Lapid at the regional trial court here last month.

Lapid's wife, Marissa, was also included in the complaint as she is also a co-defendant in one of the 13 cases handled by the law firm.

In his complaint, Panlilio said he had repeatedly demanded payment of legal fees from the Lapid couple but to no avail.

Panlilio said his law firm filed the civil case against the Lapid couple "to enforce its rights and prevent a grave injustice" and "deter others similarly situated or more specifically the defendant governor and his spouse from committing further wrongful and condemnable acts."

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

ADVISER FOR THE POOR

Lapid won't quit as governor

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—"*Hindi ko iiwan ang* Pampanga (I will not leave Pampanga)."

That's not the title of re-elected Gov. Manuel Lapid's latest action film. It is, he said, his promise to his *kabalens* (province mates).

The 45-year-old movie actor-turned-governor asked the INQUIRER to help in relaying the message that he was not resigning as governor amid reports that President Macapagal-Arroyo planned to appoint him as "presidential adviser for the poor Filipinos."

The plan, which presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao confirmed, came after the President on May 5 appointed Lapid as her special emissary to urban poor communities.

Tiglao, in a statement, said Lapid's new task will "definitely not pull him out of his local government work."

But reports said Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, the President's son who garnered the highest number of votes in the Pampanga vice gubernatorial race, would advance to the governor's post if Lapid agrees to take what seems to be a Cabinet rank.

The young Arroyo, according to the same reports, would run the capitol together with Lilia Pineda, newly elected provincial board member and wife of suspected gambling lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

Lapid said he was amused by these reports.

Similar reports on the "Mikey-Lilia tandem" flooded the capitol a few days before the May 14 elections.

In the meantime, the previous arrangement with the President remained the same, Lapid said. This means that he would continue being the President's emissary to urban poor communities in a temporary capacity and in an indefinite period.

This was his first national assignment since 1992 when he started his political career.

Ms Macapagal officially announced Lapid's new assignment in a Palace statement on May 5. His task was to "reach out (to) the supporters" of ousted President Joseph Estrada who joined violent riots outside Malacañang on May 1.

The use of a popular actor is expected to placate the anger and gain the confidence of supporters of Estrada, Lapid's erstwhile friend, movie colleague and political patron.

Lapid has visited poor communities in Metro Manila and in Davao City, distributing relief goods there and holding dialogues with urban poor leaders since May 2.

Lapid said he has been reporting to the President the problems and sentiments that leaders have articulated in the dialogues.

Why would he not opt to focus on being a presidential adviser?

His third term, he explained, was crucial to him. He said his triumph at the polls, at a time when not all movie actors were doing well in their political bids, will help him clear his reputation of being corrupt and inept, as four administrative and criminal charges pertaining to alleged quarry and land scams have claimed.

His opponents filed the charges, using their connections with Estrada, who was infuriated that Lapid junked the Nationalist People's Coalition for the Lakas-NUCD in 1995, he said.

His last term, he added, will also help prove that even movie actors and high school graduates like him can be heads of local governments.

However, his detractors and observers agree that Lapid has no patience for details, tackles plans on a day-to-day basis and prefers short-term solutions to long-term goals.

Bank robbers take off with P4M

By J. Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY–Cebu and Bohol policemen have launched a joint operation to hunt down the six suspects who robbed a branch of the Land Bank of the Philippines in Talibon town, Bohol.

Five of the suspects fled to Cebu on board a yellow pumpboat from Bagacay Port, Talibon, shortly after taking an estimated P4.7 million from the bank's vault.

Edward John Reyes, Land Bank regional head, said about P3 to P4 million were taken, but these were mostly old bills that would be surrendered to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

A lone companion was reportedly left in Talibon town after the five hurriedly boarded the pumpboat following a shootout with policemen at the Bagacay Port.

Epifania Angco, owner of the pumpboat, said the suspects disembarked at Punta Engaño, Lapu-lapu City, Mactan, before sunset Tuesday. She said it took them only an hour to travel to Punta Engaño.

Supt. Lani-o Nerez, Bohol police chief, said he was sending his men to Cebu to conduct the operation against the suspects.

Senior Supt. Jose Antonio Salvacion, Cebu police director, and Senior Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Cebu City police office director, also deployed their men to help in the manhunt operation.

Six men, in their 20s, went inside the Land Bank branch in Talibon at 1:45 p.m. on Tuesday, pretending to be nursing students.

They pulled out guns and pointed them at bank employees, hogtied a security guard and a depositor and locked up the bank employees in the toilet.

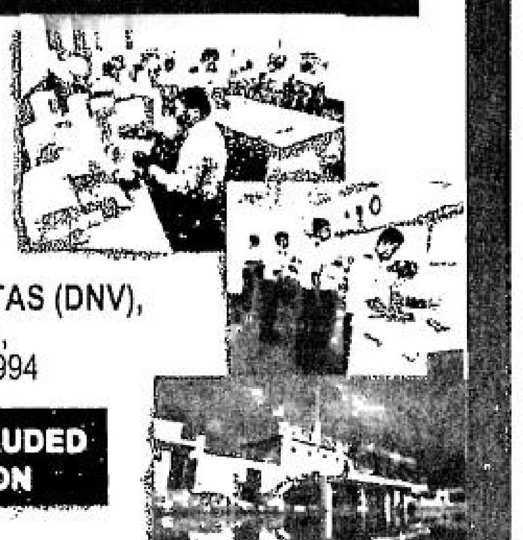
Nerez said the suspects managed to open the vault and take off with at least P4.7 million. Bank officials declined to confirm the amount.

Angco told police she did not know that the men who rented her pumpboat for P8,000 were robbers.

She said the two went to her house in Danao City, Cebu, Monday afternoon and asked if they could rent the pumpboat to fetch an old man and four women in Talibon.

Angco said the two even spent the night in her house after her husband agreed to rent out the boat for P8,000. The next day, she added, she and six crew members went to Talibon with the two men.

Angco said they docked at the Bagacay Port, some 11 kilometers from Talibon and waited for the two men.



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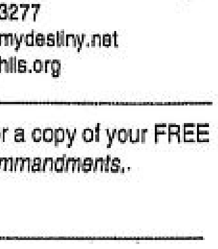

FIRM ACCUSED OF LANDGRABBING

Armed men used as Benguet land fight turns ugly

ITOGON, Benguet—A company owned by former Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin was sued for "invading" a property here that envelopes a 90-hectare hillside citrus farm which Ongpin owns.

Some 40 armed men, carrying automatic weapons, raided a 2.9-hectare property being claimed by the Ong-Siy family in Barangay Tocmo here early this month, allegedly upon Ongpin's instructions, said Michael Ong-Siy.

The armed group supposedly represented Ongpin's Highland Citrus Corp.

The Tocmo hill is located inside the watershed reservations that cover the Binga and Ambuklao hydroelectric dam facilities in nearby Bokod town.

Siy sued the company before the Itogon municipal trial court for the attack and sought P260,000 in damage claims, and P50,000 for every day that the compound is occupied by the armed group.

The suit named the company's resident manager Michael Asperin as one of the respondents.

But in a press statement sent to INQUIRER columnist Victor Agustin, Ongpin asserted his proprietary right over the property, and admitted re-taking the lot from the Ong-Siy family.

Ongpin claimed that it was in response to an April 21 incident, where the Ong-Siy family reportedly used "armed guards" to eject Ongpin's farm hands from the property.

Reports of the use of armed groups prompted Judge Jose Encarnacion of the municipal trial court here to inspect the contested land on Thursday.

Encarnacion, who was accompanied by the contesting parties, found ravaged trunks of citrus trees, strewn with rotting citrus.

The contested area was surrounded by a steel gate, manned apparently by a security team identified with Ongpin. Anti-trespassing signs were posted around the property

Campaign materials of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa were stuck on makeshift depots within the compound.

The judge also uncovered a coil of concertina barbed wire, lying seven meters from the metal gate. The Ong-Siy family members told the judge about the dismantled electric cables which, they claimed, were installed when they took over the property.

Michael Ong-Siy claimed that Ongpin's "commando unit" attacked their compound at 2 a.m. on May 6, "under cover of darkness" and terrorized four security guards into submission.

The security guards were forced to flee an hour after the alleged attack, before the men hammered down the compound's concrete walls, Ong-Siy said.

"We had just surveyed the area. We purchased the property from (Baguio councilor) Richard Cariño eight years ago. (It originally belonged) to Candido Simeon, our neighbor there… I discovered (an estimated) 5,000 citrus trees occupying about 60 percent of our property when I finally visited the compound. I was shocked," Ong-Siy said.

He said his family only secured an independent survey of their property late last year, after it sought an audience with Ongpin's representatives.

But Ongpin, in the press statement, insisted he bought the same property from Simeon in 1977 and had the documents to prove it. *Desiree Caluza with a report from Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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ROUNDUP

4 girls drown

LUBA, Abra—Four high school students drowned on Thursday at the Abra River after attending a farewell party for a priest in the poblacion, a three-hour drive from Bangued, the capital town. The victims were identified as Pauline Labutan, Richelle Domingo, Maryann Domas and Maria Basilia Ayson, all students of the Luba-Tubo Catholic High School here. The four attended a farewell party for Fr. Tony Calla-utit, assistant parish priest, who would be transferred next week. Reports said the four tried to retrieve a floating object from the river when they drowned. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

3,000 lose jobs

DAVAO CITY—Up to 3,000 City Hall workers here will join the ranks of the unemployed following a memorandum issued by outgoing Mayor Benjamin de Guzman, telling them not to report for work after May 31 when their contracts end. De Guzman said their job orders could no longer be extended since the appropriations approved for them by the city council was only good until that date. He said he has no authority to disburse money without authority from the city council. Those who will be affected are workers paid under the budget of the city mayor's office. *Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Soldier, pal found dead

COTABATO CITY—A soldier and his girlfriend were found dead in a grassy area in a state-run university in Kabacan, North Cotabato, on Monday. The victims, believed to have been killed Sunday night, were identified as Pfc. Joven Velasquez of Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, and his girlfriend Marvelyn Javier of Kidapawan City. A security guard of the University of Southern Mindanao told police he heard gunshots Sunday night in an area where the two victims were found. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Village head, son charged

BATANGAS CITY—Police filed election-related charges against barangay captain Anastacio de Mesa and his 17-year-old son, Jesse, both of Barangay San Pedro here, for snatching three ballot boxes from a polling place in Barangay San Pedro. Senior Insp. Domingo Baril, city police chief investigator, said the two snatched the ballot at 10:30 p.m., May 14, as teachers were counting the votes inside the polling places. Responding policemen recovered the three boxes with the ballots still intact a few meters from the De Mesa house about four hours later. The suspects escaped. *Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northwestern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila Hi 33° Lo 25°	Baguio Hi 24° Lo 16°	Tuguegarao Hi 35° Lo 22°	Laoag Hi 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone Hi 33° Lo 23°	Tagaytay Hi 31° Lo 22°	Legazpi Hi 33° Lo 25°	Calapan Hi 33° Lo 24°
Bacolod Hi 33° Lo 26°	Roxas Hi 32° Lo 26°	Cebu Hi 32° Lo 25°	Tacloban Hi 33° Lo 26°
Gen. Santos Hi 32° Lo 24°	Zamboanga Hi 33° Lo 25°	Cagayan de Oro Hi 32° Lo 24°	Davao Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research /5/31/01

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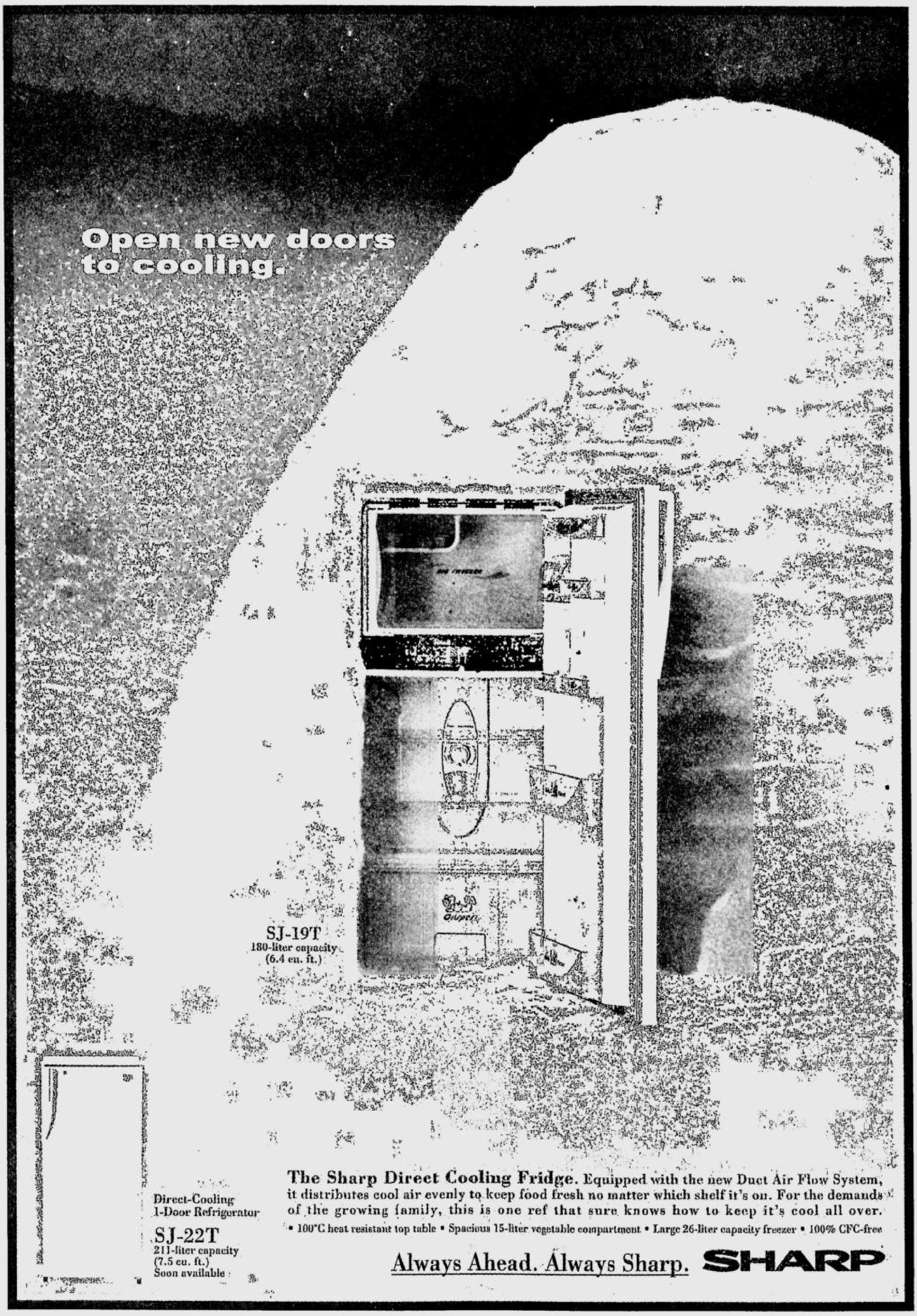

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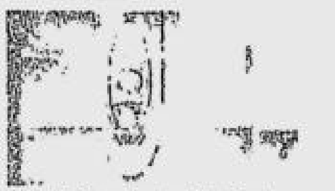
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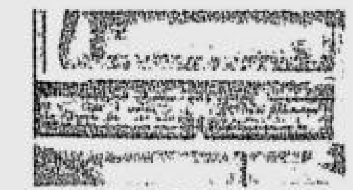
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MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER OBSERVES 32ND ANNIVERSARY

CERTIFIED ISO 9002, EN 46002, THE FIRST IN ASIA

Makati Medical Center celebrates its 32nd anniversary today on the crest of an impressive record as a world-class hospital, affirmed by two international certifications for high healthcare standards and service excellence.

The ISO 9002 and EN (European Norm) 46002 certifications were awarded by the Switzerland-based International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to the hospital last December as a result of years of quality health service anchored on a Total Quality Management (TQM) program involving all sectors in the premier medical institution.

MMC observes its anniversary nurtured by the idealism of its Founding Fathers and guided by the credo of the medical profession that healing the sick takes precedence over profit.

Conceived as a vital component of a self-contained community south of Manila in the mid-sixties, MMC emerged as one of the best-equipped hospitals with the most capable staff extending to patients, rich and poor alike, the highest quality of medical care.

FOUNDING FATHERS' VISION

As Makati developed into a residential and business district, the plan to build a modern hospital in the growing municipality came to fruition as industrialist Enrique Zobel of the Ayala conglomerate met with two prominent figures in medical practice, Doctors Constantino P. Manahan and Jose Y. Fores. The two were requested by Zobel to enlist a core group to plan the development of a hospital that would eventually become the premier medical institution in the country.

The two doctors accepted the challenge and organized the team that emerged as the founders of MMC.

Manahan wrote about the progress of MMC in these words: "In a poor country like ours, where government expenditures for health care delivery falls short of accepted international norms, it is imperative that private institutions should help fill the gap."

Unlike hospitals in other countries where the cost of medical care is subsidized by their governments, the charity done by MMC is not subsidized by the Philippine government. MMC spends 15 to 20 percent of its net patient revenues annually for charity and medical outreach programs.

CARING FOR THE NEEDY

MMC's charity program had served 145,827 in-patients and 1,676,039 out-patients since it was established in 1972 and until September 2000.

"MMC adheres to the primal concept that a hospital is a sanctuary for the sick," Dr. Jose Y. Fores had said. "It is in this spirit that the Center is sharing its success with Filipinos."

As recounted by one of its founders, the late Dr. Carlos L. Sevilla, a group of idealist medical professionals got together to pursue a common goal—the establishment of a hospital equipped with the best and the latest in medical facilities and technology. A health provider manned by competent and well-trained medical staff.

A hospital whose quality standards approximate those in the United States and other developed countries so that Filipino patients need not go out of the country for treatment.

The motivation transcended beyond business and embraced the spirituality of the noble profession with the dream taking root before the hospital's inauguration on May 31, 1969 with former First Lady Imelda R. Marcos unveiling the MMC marker.

Of the 11 Founding Fathers, seven have rejoined their Creator. They are Architect Luis Ma. Araneta, who crafted the design of the hospital's building, Doctors Mariano M. Alimurung, Manahan, Jose Y. Fores, Manuel C. Fernandez Sr., Sevilla and Daniel Go.

The surviving members are Doctors Raul G. Fores—the incumbent president and medical director– Romeo H. Gustilo, chairman, businessmen Jorge L. Araneta and Julieta Ledesma.

Serving the legacy of MMC's founders is the present set of the board of directors: Doctors Romeo H. Gustilo, Benjamin N. Alimurung, Vicente Q. Arguelles, Manuel O. Fernandez Jr., Raul G. Fores, Roberto K. Macasaet, Edmundo V. Villacorta, Ariston G. Bautista, Jaime O. Sevilla, Jose San Gabriel, Jorge Araneta, Armando L. Eduque, Julieta Ledesma, lawyer Constantino L. Manahan Jr. and Commissioners Aurora Arnaez and Jack Arroyo.

The architecture of MMC was unique in the 1960s. The building itself was like a piece of sculpture amid the vast space of sparsely populated Makati. Its interior was not the stereotype white hospital which looked sterile and antiseptic. Architect Luis Ma. Araneta understood then that healing was more than medication and therapy, but a process which needs to involve all the senses, and create a holistic harmony of body and soul.

SETTING THE STANDARD

A year after the inauguration, MMC began its pioneering journey that defined the rich history of the hospital.

MMC pioneered the acquisition of Hycel 17, the first fully computerized blood chemistry auto-analyzer here.

Another first—a buzzword in MMC—is the setting up of clinical pharmacy in 1974, the only patient-oriented comprehensive pharmacy services in the country.

As demands increased, the cramped 80-sq.m. Emergency Room located at the rear of the hospital was transferred to a sprawling complex measuring over 800 sq. m. Inaugurated in May 1987 with then President Cory Aquino as guest of honor, the facility became the country's first Emergency Medicine Department fully equipped with the latest in advanced cardiac life support system. It was a hospital within a hospital.

From 1976 to 1989, MMC established the Nuclear Medicine Department, Pharmacy Bulk Compounding Section and the CT-Scan (Computed Tomography Center); undertook the first AIDS and blood test for hepatitis before transfusion; and opened the Heart Wing where over 450 open-heart procedures have been performed.

In 1995, a new wing that provided an additional 100 private rooms and suites was completed. On the roof deck, two helipads are available to clients, guests and emergency patients.

The project brought the number of rooms at the nine-storey MMC to 787 with the first three floors housing the physicians' clinics, while the nursery room has 87 bassinets.

And in September 2000, a one-stop facility, the Breast Clinic, was completed and inaugurated whose facilities include a painless breast scanner and comprehensive services. The clinic was designed for women specifying pink and lavender wallpaper, piped-in music and elegant flower arrangements --and manned by an all-women staff.

Besides expansion projects, MMC continued an equipment acquisition program to maintain its status as one of best-equipped hospitals in the world.

Today, MMC has kept pace with advancements in medical science, ensuring safe diagnosis and treatment of diseases with the latest digital-quality equipment as demands for modern healthcare increase.

SERVING GOD AND HUMANITY

With the host of accomplishments, what lies ahead for MMC? With a conviction that the patient's health needs are the primary concern of the hospital, the institution starts from where it left off: administering healthcare through uncompromising dedication to Total Quality Approach.

As Dr. Raul G. Fores said when MMC received the ISO 9002 and EN 46002 certifications: "Is it because we have good surgeons, cardiologists, anesthesiologists? No, it's because we treat all our patients well regardless of their stations in life. We have never said 'No' to the poor."

Dispensing world-class service, Makati Medical Center remains confident to face the challenges of the new millennium in the service of God and humanity.

ISO-EN CERTIFICATION: THE HIGHEST STANDARD IN THE MEDICAL INDUSTRY

A highly coveted international recognition for product or service excellence is the ISO 9000 certification while the highest possible quality standards for medical services is the European Norm (EN) 46000.

The ISO 9000 and EN 46000 certifications are conferred by the Switzerland-based International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in coordination with the various accredited national standard bodies from about 140 countries.

An organization bestowed an ISO certification means that the company has met the stringent quality requirements specified by one of three standards: ISO 9001, ISO 9002 or ISO 9003. It shows that the quality system developed and implemented by the organization has been audited by an accredited external auditor (registrar) and found to be effective and working to the benefit of consumers or patients.

In the case of Makati Medical Center, the hospital has been certified by the ISO, through the Germany-based TUV Product Service, one of the oldest and largest certification bodies in the world, to have met the ISO 9002 standards for comprehensive healthcare.

MMC has passed the quality system requirements in all aspects of operations. ISO 9002 quality system requirements cover such areas as management responsibilities, quality system requirements, contract review, document and data control, purchasing requirements, customer-supplied products, product identification and tracing, inspection and test status of products, control of non-conforming products, corrective and preventive action, handling, storage and delivery, control of quality records, internal quality audit requirements, training requirements, servicing requirements, and statistical techniques.

The EN 46002 certification, which was granted MMC along with the ISO 9002, is the harmonized European standard for quality assurance in medical device manufacture and medical services.

The EN 46002 explicitly requires cleanliness, environmental controls, traceability and other issues to be addressed specifically. It includes looking into critical processes such as hygiene, sanitation, infection control and sterilization.

While ISO is a general set of quality standards applicable across the board to many industries, products and services, the EN standards are meant specifically for healthcare services. EN specifies healthcare standards in addition to those of the ISO.

MMC's EN 46002 certification is the first in Asia and Makati Medical is the only one in the region to hold a dual certification from the ISO. A few hospitals in Asia have attained ISO certification but no hospital has yet attained the ISO/EN combined certification such as what MMC has achieved.

German-based EN auditors said MMC is only the 30th hospital in the world to receive the EN certification.

The ISO certification process starts when an organization develops and implements a quality system.

The organization invites an accredited external auditor (international certification body) to evaluate the effectiveness of the quality system. If the auditors find the quality system to have met their standards and ISO requirements, they would certify it.

The auditors will then issue an official certificate to the organization and will record the achievement in their registry.

The organization, on the other hand, can now claim that the quality of its products or services is managed, controlled and assured by a registered ISO quality system.

MMC'S achievement was the result of years of deliberate efforts to excel in providing healthcare to the people, from admission to discharge. The premier hospital has put in place a Total Quality Management (TQM) program for several years now involving all hospital personnel, from janitors to nurses to doctors.

With a continuous quality improvement program, an ISO 9002 certification and EN 46002 certification, medical service at MMC is indeed of the highest quality and at par with the best in the world.

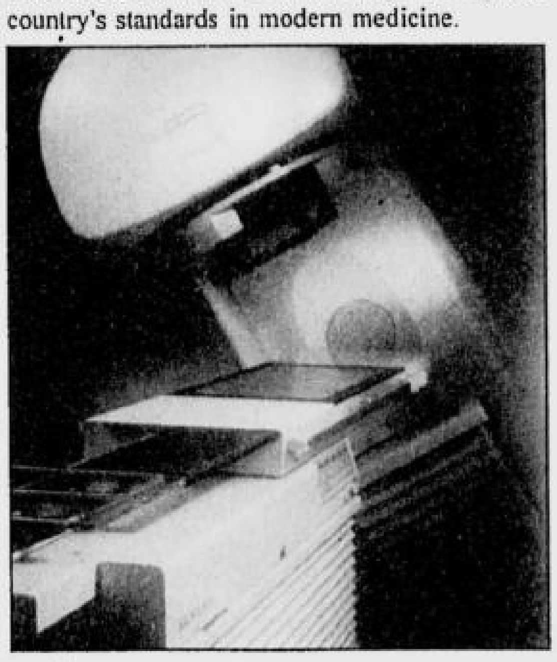
Leader in healthcare delivery

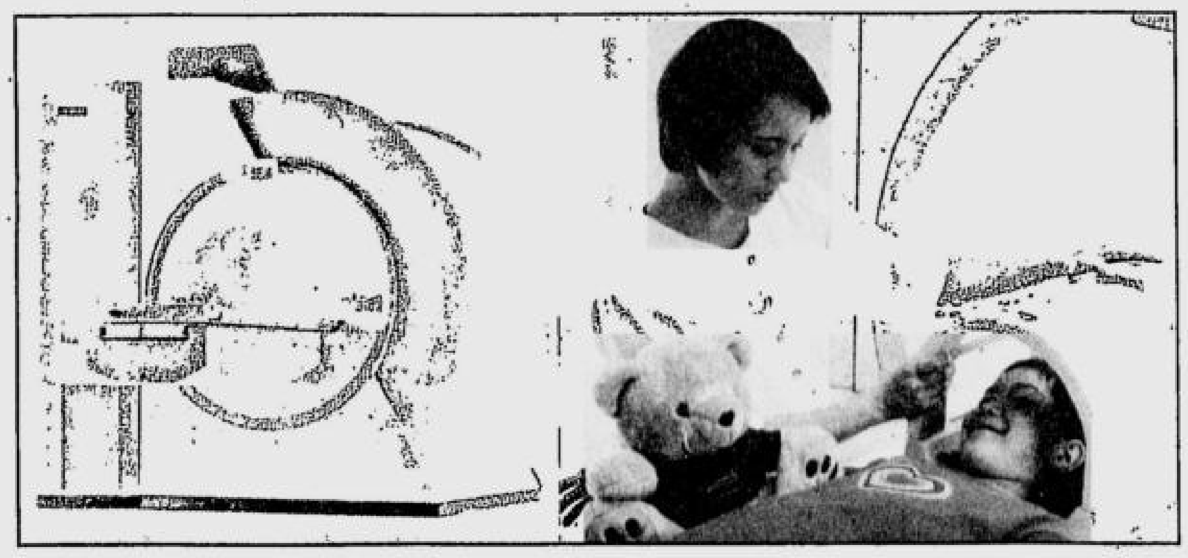
Makati Medical Center is at the forefront among Philippine hospitals and compares favorably with its Asian counterparts today. Makati Med has acquired many "firsts" in medical equipment and facilities, earning for itself the prestige of being the country's premier medical institution. As it marks its 32nd anniversary, MMC strives to maintain its stature as the leading healthcare provider.

A part of the hospital's improvement program is the upgrading and acquisition of the latest in medical technology. Soon to be inaugurated at the Diagnostic Radiology Department is the *Magnetom Symphony* MRI whole body scanner with Quantum Gradients that produce sharp and detailed images, allowing easier interpretation and more accurate diagnosis. The machine features a wider opening that lessens the claustrophobic effect on the patient undergoing the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). It also features the latest sequences in MR imaging. The system is the first in the country and has the same configuration available in teaching hospitals such as New York University.

By the third quarter of 2001, the Radiology Department will complete installation of its *Primus Linear Accelerator*, Siemens' top-of-the-line in oncology or cancer care. The machine is the second for the department, acquired to accommodate the growing number of patients. The *Primus* will provide the maximum in precision treatment with its "conformal therapy" feature that ideally conforms in size and shape to the "planning target volume," allowing dose escalation while sparing normal tissues. An on-line three-dimensional treatment planning system makes the treatment process easier.

With these additional investments, Makati Med ensures that patients receive the optimum in medical care while consistently setting the country's standards in modern medicine.





HOSPITAL WITH A HEART

"Thank you very much for all that you do for my sisters and the poor they bring to you." – Mother Teresa

Providing first-rate healthcare to patients regardless of wealth, race, or creed is the humanitarian mission, which for over three decades guided the Makati Medical Center. Through its charity program, the hospital, as of April 2001, has reached out to 1,821,866 indigent patients. Celebrating its 32nd anniversary today, Makati Med upholds the virtue that the community regards it for—a Hospital with a Heart.

Makati Med is home to a number of medical foundations, one of which is the Makati Heart Foundation (MHF) organized in 1989 by renowned cardiac surgeon Jorge Garcia of the Washington Hospital Center. Seeking to improve the quality of heart care in the Philippines through research, training and education in Cardiology and Cardiovascular Surgery, "Doctor Jorge" initiated sending Filipino trainees to Washington Hospital where they can be completely familiarized with different hands-on techniques in actual cases. The specialization which they, in turn, practice here benefits many Filipino heart patients.

The Santa Lucia International Eye Bank (SLIEB) is another foundation within the hospital. Inaugurated in 1995, the foundation is dedicated to its mission of restoring sight to corneally blind individuals by making corneas and eye tissues available for corneal transplantation. Among the top seven eye banks in the world, SLIEB eye surgeons perform transplants on an "as needed basis" and the eye bank supplies tissues for free to poor and deserving patients. The eye bank now shares surplus tissue with several countries around the world.

Much earlier, the Tropical Disease Foundation was established to focus on research and training projects in the treatment and control of tropical infectious diseases. Dr. Constantino P. Manahan first chaired the foundation. Its most significant project was the 1997 Nationwide Tuberculosis Prevalence Survey on behalf of the Department of Health.

A Diabetes Educational Clinic, which also holds office in MMC, complements the doctor's management of diabetic patients. The clinic teaches the patients about the malady, using food exchange list, administering insulin, monitoring blood and urine glucose and caring for oneself during "sick days." The clinic coordinates efforts with the Philippine Center for Diabetes Education Foundation.

Makati Medical, through the years, has accepted referrals from various government and private agencies such as Alay-Puso, Bantay-Bata, Bukas-Palad, Damayan, DSWD, Home of Joy of the Missionaries of Charity, Kapwa Ko Mahal Ko, Tahanang Walang Hagdan and World Vision Philippines.

Recto drops to 12th place in latest tally

(From page A1)

sioner Rufus Rodriguez predicted that Recto would further slide at the resumption of the canvassing at 2 p.m. today when the NBC issues a resolution deducting 93,000 votes from Recto.

The votes were overstated in the tabulations for Recto in 10 towns in Tawi-Tawi (61,000 votes padded); six towns in Zamboanga del Norte (17,000) and Palimbang town, Sultan Kudarat (15,000).

"After these votes have been deducted from him and with the help of bailiwick votes from Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Eastern Samar and Maguindanao, Recto will be out of the Magic 13 by Friday," Rodriguez boldly predicted.

The resolution covering the correction of Recto's votes by 93,000 was to be taken up by Comelec commissioners last night and was set to be issued today.

Proclamation today

Although a little more than a million votes from four provinces have yet to the counted, Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo said the NBC was preparing for a "formal" proclamation of winning senators on June 1.

He did not say if all or only the leading senators in the Magic 13 would be proclaimed.

Commissioner Rex Borra revealed that Benipayo had prepared a draft invitation for the proclamation but he declined to say to whom the invitations shall be sent out.

But Rodriguez said a proclamation at this time would be "legally premature" since there were still 1.2 million votes yet to be canvassed.

"For this honorable board to completely ignore these 1.2 million voters by partial proclamation of supposed winning senatorial candidates would in effect be disenfranchising the registered voters who cast their votes," Rodriguez said in his six-page opposition.

"This cannot be legally done," he said.

Rodriguez explained that the 1.2 million votes were "too substantial to be ignored" since these could affect the final spots of the winning senatorial candidates.

"There is no logic whatsoever for the Comelec to distinguish between candidates whose voters differ by only a few thousands, especially there are documented cases of fraud in the canvassing," he said.

Rodriguez said the Comelec should not proclaim any winners until two petitions opposing the partial proclamation, one filed by him and the other by reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, had been resolved.

The canvassing of the COC from Caloocan City was delayed by more than eight hours due to the lack of signatures by two members of the board of canvassers.

After PnM and PPC lawyers had reached an agreement, the NBC ordered the tabulation of results from the precincts since the COC was not properly filled out. The results, however, are still subject to verification and audit.

Immovable

With 98 COCs out of the 102 canvassed as of 7 last night, independent Noli De Castro was immovable at No.1 while eight from the People Power Coalition and four from the PnM remained at the Magic 13.

All, except for Recto and Ejercito who traded positions, remained in the spots they occupied at the end of the canvassing on Tuesday.

PnM candidates are clustered in the 9th to 11th places, occupied by Edgardo Angara, Panfilo Lacson and Ejercito, respectively.

Honasan remained at 13th place, but only needs around 80,000 votes to pull down Recto.

When the canvassing resumes at 2 p.m. today and the resolution for the correction of votes is promulgated, Recto will automatically drop to No. 13 on account of the 93,000 votes deducted from him.

Honasan still has a commanding 733,455 lead over Juan Ponce Enrile who has been at 14th place for a week now.

Rodriguez said either Enrile or Santiago, currently at 15th and only 22,363 votes behind Enrile, would dislodge Recto after the bailiwick votes from Eastern Samar and three Mindanao provinces had been canvassed.

Former Sen. Ernesto Maceda of the Nationalist People's Coalition challenged Recto to disown the votes allegedly padded in his favor.

"I'm still hoping that Recto would take this golden opportunity to show that he deserves to be a grandson of the great Claro M. Recto," Maceda said in a news conference.

Jesus Crispin Remulla III, PnM lawyer, said Recto could be charged with poll fraud because he benefited from the alleged padding of votes.

"When you are a beneficiary, you are assumed to be part of the authorship of the crime," Remulla said. ***With a report from Dona Pazzibugan***

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Raffle Draw Date: November 5, 2001 (cut-off date for ADB computation is on October 31, 2001)

PROMO PERIOD: May 2 to October 31, 2001

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3 Cut-off date for ADB computation is every month-end.
4 Winners will be determined through a computerized draw. The computer shall generate the account number to be included in the raffle based on the points earned.
5 The account number will serve as the raffle number. The number of points earned from each account will be equivalent to the number of times the account number will be generated for the raffle.
6 An account can only win once on the same raffle date. In case an account is drawn more than once, the account holder is entitled to claim the prize of higher value.
7 Winners shall be informed through registered mail and through a one-time newspaper ad of national circulation.
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Ramos, MILF caution gov't vs vigilantes

(From page A1)

the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after his arrival from China.

Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said on Tuesday that the military would "welcome" vigilante groups in flushing out the Abu Sayyaf Group.

Ramos said the government should instead tap members of the Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF) if it wanted to crush the Moro bandits.

Unlike vigilantes, members of the CHDF are an extension of the military reserved force and hence covered by military laws, according to Ramos.

"If there are already established CHDFs in Sulu and Basilan, by all means they must be utilized."

The CHDF was formed in the '80s to fight communist insurgents.

Ramos also proposed that the government tap "local assets," including the mayor, the police chief and his force, barangay officials, the local priest and imam in neutralizing the Abu Sayyaf.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. described the plan to use vigilantes as "a very dangerous proposal."

"It will only lead to an escalation of violence and probably extra-legal justice, summary executions, things we should avoid and therefore, I do not sanction," Pimentel said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon warned that vigilantes might just pick on anyone and bring their heads to the government so that they could receive part of the P100-million bounty that Malacañang had offered.

"This could lead to indiscriminate killings by vigilantes or anyone who is suspected to be a member of the Moro group," said Biazon, chair of the Senate National Security and Defense Committee.

He said the indiscriminate killings could happen because the military and police had no complete data on Abu Sayyaf members, including their names, pictures and backgrounds.

No heads please

Biazon suggested that the government discourage vigilante groups from surrendering of heads or bodies of suspected Abu Sayyaf members.

"What the government should accept from them are only information, not bodies of suspected Abu Sayyaf members," Biazon said.

He said the job of arresting or killing of suspected Abu Sayyaf members should be left to the Armed Forces or the Philippine National Police.

The militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Pamalakaya urged Ms Macapagal to recall her order to the Armed Forces to arm vigilante groups.

Orly Marcellana, KMP spokesperson, said his group was opposing the arming of civilians because the military might use them against peasants critical of militarization and the government policy on land reform.

Nolly Serrano, spokesperson of the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, expressed fears that the P100-million bounty offered by President Arroyo would lead to the "mushrooming of vigilantes and other bandit groups capable of sowing organized violence and terror against the people."

Wilson Fortaleza of Sanlakas said his group did not agree with the AFP's decision to tap vigilante groups.

"There is no control over these groups and they can take justice into their own hands. This makes them prone to abuse," Fortaleza told reporters.

Alvin Luque, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Davao City secretary general said putting up a bounty for the arrest of the Abu Sayyaf bandits would not solve the Moro problem.

He said the money should be spent on the delivery of basic social services to the Moro people.

Fr. Robert Reyes of Kompil II said he was "scared" of the abuse that vigilante groups might commit.

Reyes said vigilante groups might inflame the religious conflict between Christians and Muslims.

"The more well-known vigilante groups in the past have been borne out of the religious conflict in the South," he said.

In Digos City, the MILF said the military decision to declare an "open season" on the Abu Sayyaf might lead to the creation of a monster similar to the Ilaga group of priest killer Norberto Manero Jr. in the 1970s.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the vigilantes might indiscriminately conduct operations in Muslim villages as they did in the 1970s against the Blackshirts and Barracudas of the early Moro rebellion.

"To us, with so many groups interested in extracting revenge against the Abu Sayyaf, it is not remote that massive human rights violations would be committed against civilian Muslims," Kabalu said.

Kabalu said vigilantes, who share "a very strong anti-Muslim sentiment," might attack villages in the guise of running after the Abu Sayyaf.

Enlist MILF support

He said the military could enlist the help of the Moro National Liberation Front, which signed a peace agreement with the government in 1996.

"If that is not enough, the MILF could lend its hand," he said.

The MILF is interested in resolving the hostage crisis because un-Islamic activities such as terrorism and kidnapping are not sanctioned by real revolutionary groups, according to Kabalu.

The opposition to the use of vigilantes prompted Malacañang to clarify that it was not encouraging vigilante groups in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf.

"This administration does not condone or encourage vigilantes. I talked to (AFP spokesperson Brig.) Gen. Edilberto Adan himself and he said that he never used the word 'vigilantes,'" Tiglao said in a press briefing.

Tiglao said that what Adan had said was that the "military will not stop law-abiding citizens with properly authorized firearms from making citizens' arrest against terrorists."

"The actual intent of General Adan's message is that we are encouraging all citizens to help us in providing information that would lead to the arrest of Abu Sayyaf terrorists, wherever they are," he said.

And whatever help these citizens' groups would offer would have to be coursed through the military or the police, according to Tiglao.

Adan said that any group "authorized by the government" to bear arms were welcome to help "fix and engage if necessary" the Abu Sayyaf.

He said the use of armed groups against the Abu Sayyaf was justified under the "doctrine of citizens' arrest."

"If a citizen knows that a crime was recently committed or is being committed, he can effect an arrest," he said.

Adan revealed that a number of former Abu Sayyaf members and their families were actively cooperating with government forces.

"These people have learned from their own experience that that the Abu Sayyaf has done great damage to the country," Adan said.

Adan noted that some former Abu Sayyaf members were killed by their erstwhile comrades because they refused to return their guns to the group.

Bishops for vigilantes

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines said it was not against the use of vigilante groups as long as the members were screened by the military.

"We are not against the putting up of a bounty and even vigilantism per se. But it opens up a lot of opportunities for abuse. The vigilantes should be properly screened by the military officials," said Msgr. Hernando Coronel, the CBCP's media director.

The paramilitary groups should also be under the supervision of at least one military officer, according to Coronel.

"We have seen their effectiveness in some instances. But the experience during martial law has shown that there is always the possibility of abuses so they have to be screened," Coronel told the INQUIRER. *With reports from Martin P. Marfil, Alcuin Papa, Cynthia Balana and Norman Bordadora in Manila; and Julie Alipala-Inot, Jonathan F. Ma, Alex Young, Joel B. Escovilla and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Malacañang defends news blackout

(From page A1)

simple terrorists out to get ransom money."

At press time, the President was having cocktails in Malacañang with tabloid editors and publishers in a continuing effort to win support for the news blackout.

She met with officers of print and broadcast outfits Tuesday night.

Asked about that meeting, Tiglao said that "as expected, press institutions would still have their points of view."

"What we're hoping is they would understand that we're not doing this for the administration's survival. We're doing this for the sake of the hostages, to ensure that they are not hurt," he said. "These people (the Abu Sayyaf) are crazed people who do not listen to reason at all," he added in Taglish

But Adan clarified that what was being implemented was not a complete news blackout.

"We will provide what the public needs to know about what is going on," he said, adding that he would conduct two news briefings daily at Camp Aguinaldo until the hostage crisis is resolved.

Adan also said that the AFP Southern Command in Zamboanga City and the Sulu-based Task Force Comet had each put up a media bureau.

But he pointed out that the release of information to the media would be guided by two considerations.

"First, we will keep in mind the security of the hostages. Second, we must deny any information that the terrorists can use against our forces," he said.

Adan said the hostages' families could seek information from the AFP Civil Relations Service, which he also heads.

Based in Camp Aguinaldo, the CRS can be reached through telephone numbers 912-1208 and 911-7754.

'Help these people'

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, chair of a special task force set up to ensure the safety of the country's resorts, also appealed to the media to consider the feelings of the hostages' families.

He said Malacañang was not banning the media from reporting on the hostage crisis but was only asking their help in bringing about the swift and safe rescue of the hostages and in providing moral support to the families.

"Let us help these people. Let us pray for them and for the safety of their loved ones. Let us not bother them. Let us not show their dwellings," Gordon said.

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona said foreign governments would be asked, through their respective embassies, to restrain their journalists from traveling to Mindanao to cover the hostage crisis.

Guingona said the Department of Foreign Affairs would issue diplomatic notes to this effect.

"We have to learn from experience. (Members of the media), with all their good intentions, have only emboldened (the Abu Sayyaf) and were even taken hostage themselves," he said, referring to the bandits' hostage-taking binge last year that included French and German journalists.

The journalists were released only after payment of ransom.

Former President Fidel Ramos cited the same instance in saying that he was in favor of a temporary news blackout.

He said this would keep reporters from interviewing the bandits in their lairs, and, thus, from creating security problems for the military.

Ramos also proposed that Cabinet officials and foreign ambassadors be kept away from negotiations for the release of the hostages.

But the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) said the news blackout, "unilaterally imposed by the government, does not, and must not, deter the media from reporting the news."

"From our view, the news blackout declared by the government means that it will control the flow of information to the media about what is going on in the field of operations, that it will choose what to report and when to report it to the media," the KBP said in a statement.

"On the other hand, the media (have) the duty to report whatever information will give an accurate view of the situation, whether that information comes from the military or from some other source. If the information is related to tactical operations, the media should be responsible enough to see to it that its broadcast or publication is timed so as not to compromise the success of the mission or endanger the lives of soldiers and innocent civilians," it said.

The KBP added: "At the same time we must emphasize that the responsibility for deciding what to report lies on the journalist. Otherwise it will be the government that will dictate what people should and should not know.

"To her credit, President Macapagal-Arroyo understands this very well. That is why she can only appeal to the private media to cooperate in the news blackout. But the extent to which the media can cooperate in this news blackout also largely depends on the government—on what kind of information it puts out and when it decides to put it out. The media still cannot abrogate their duty to report the truth."

All-out war

In Davao City, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary general Alvin Luque warned that the administration could be hatching another all-out war if it would insist on imposing a news blackout.

Luque said the conditions that attended the previous administration's all-out war last year were present, like the news blackout and the announcement of the intensive attacks on the Abu Sayyaf.

"And we all know that the attack on the Abu Sayyaf is not an attack on (the bandits) per se, but will also affect the communities in the area," he said. "The point is not to favor the Abu Sayyaf but to ensure the people's right to information."

Joel Virador, secretary general of the Karapatan Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights, said a news blackout would be dangerous because the public would not be able monitor the legitimate military operations from the indiscriminate killing in the communities.

"It would set a dangerous precedent. Who will assess the real situation if the media are not allowed to cover this important event?" Virador said.

He added: "The government must be afraid of something because they are afraid the media will cover the event."

But news blackout or not, information is somehow flowing freely in Puerto Princesa City, where the Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort is located.

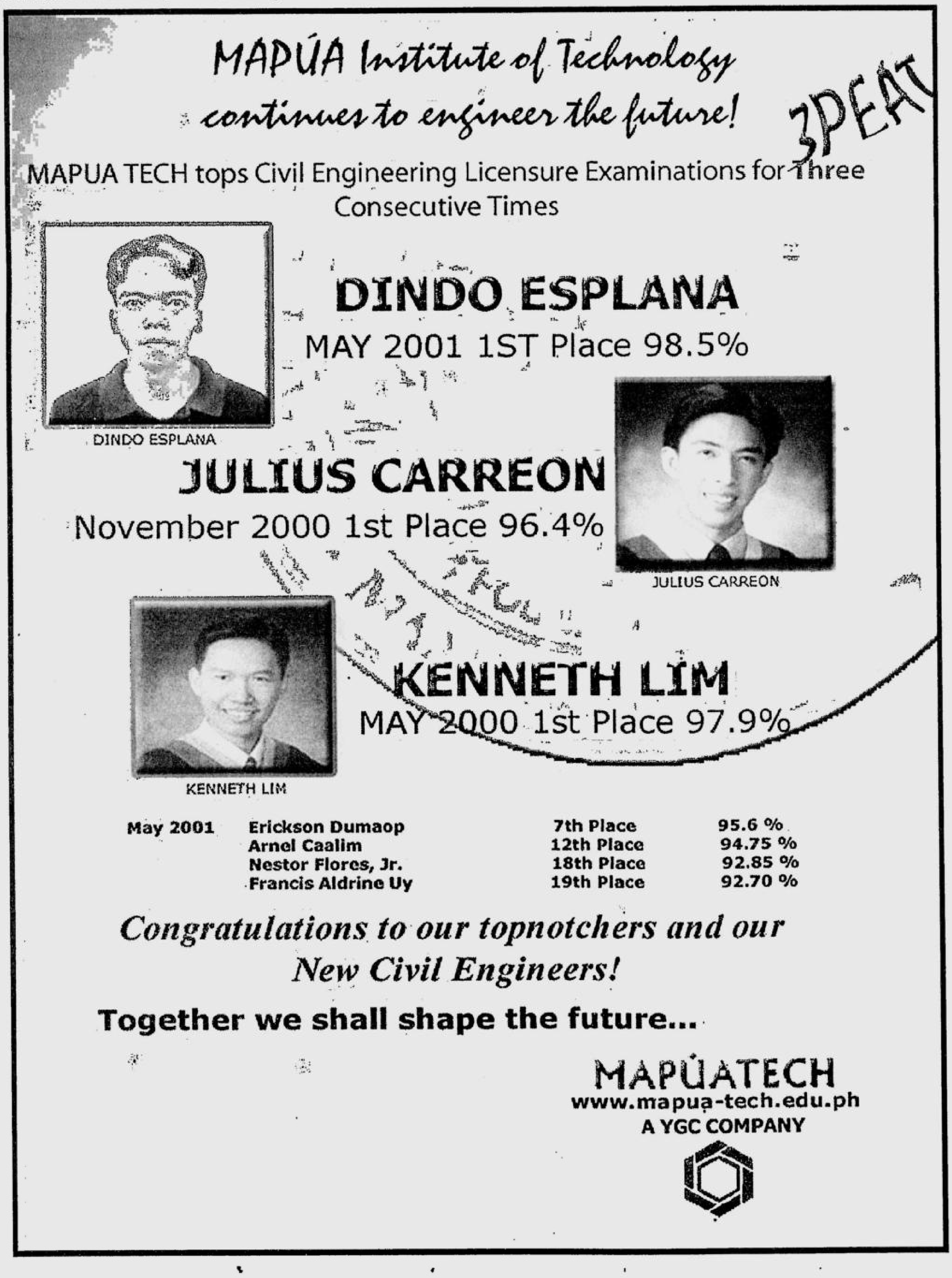
People who allegedly saw the bandits holding the hostages voluntarily went to radio stations to air their story.

They came mostly from the southernmost island of Balabac, the Palawan municipality nearest to Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Yesterday, a couple went to a radio station to give information on the sighting of the bandits.

The duo described the boat as loaded with many people.

But the station decided not to air the couple's statements on radio. It called the Western Command and turned the couple over to authorities. *With reports from Rocky Nazareno, Juliet L. Javellana and TJ Burgonio in Manila; Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Joel B. Escovilla, Grace Cantal-Albasin, Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*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Erap backs Gloria policy vs Abu Sayyaf

(From page A1)

Deposed President Joseph Estrada, who had sent a team of negotiators to talk with the Abu Sayyaf guerrillas who abducted 21 people from the Malaysian resort of Sipadan 13 months ago, yesterday issued a statement giving his assessment of the Palawan kidnapping.

He said the "multinationality and culture of the Sipadan hostages" and the "circumstances of their abduction" were different from the Palawan abduction that "may require a different solution."

While the Sipadan hostages were mostly foreigners, 17 of the Palawan hostages are Filipinos and three are Americans.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, earlier noted that the hefty ransom paid to the Abu Sayyaf for the Sipadan hostages had been used by the bandits to buy more powerful firearms and motorboats.

Willing to negotiate again

One of those who negotiated for the Sipadan hostages' release, retired Army Col. Ernesto "Dragon" Pacuño, yesterday expressed willingness to negotiate again with the Abu Sayyaf.

"If I will be called, I will do it in the service of the country," said Pacuño.

Pacuño, who ran and lost in the May 14 gubernatorial race in Abra, predicted that the bandits would be making their ransom demand soon.

"I could not see any reason they did it (take hostages) except for money, specially with the inclusion of foreigners," he said.

Pacuño's wife is a relative of Abu Sayyaf leader Galib Andang, alias Commander Robot.

Call for unity

Estrada, in his first public statement since he was arrested and jailed on plunder charges, said the Palawan kidnapping "once again brought embarrassment to our country."

He called on Filipinos to "rise above political bickering and unite to support our police authorities to hasten the resolution of this problem."

"This is not a basketball game nor a political propaganda campaign. What is at stake here are people's lives and the reputation of our country in the eyes of the global community," Estrada said.

"Monday morning quarterbacking will not save the lives of the hostages," he said, likening critics of the government's approach to post-game, armchair analysis of American football weekend matches.

He backed moves by the Macapagal administration to hunt down the bandits.

He also appealed to members of media to restrain themselves in their coverage of the incident and to cooperate with the government so it could conduct an "unhampered rescue operation."

Hagedorn's offer

Not to be outdone, Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn yesterday offered himself as hostage in exchange for the freedom of the 20 hostages.

Hagedorn, an Estrada ally, predicted that the guerrillas would be making their ransom offer during a radio interview with Bombo Radyo from Makati City.

He said he decided to offer himself as hostage after hearing the plea of the mother of one of the hostages.

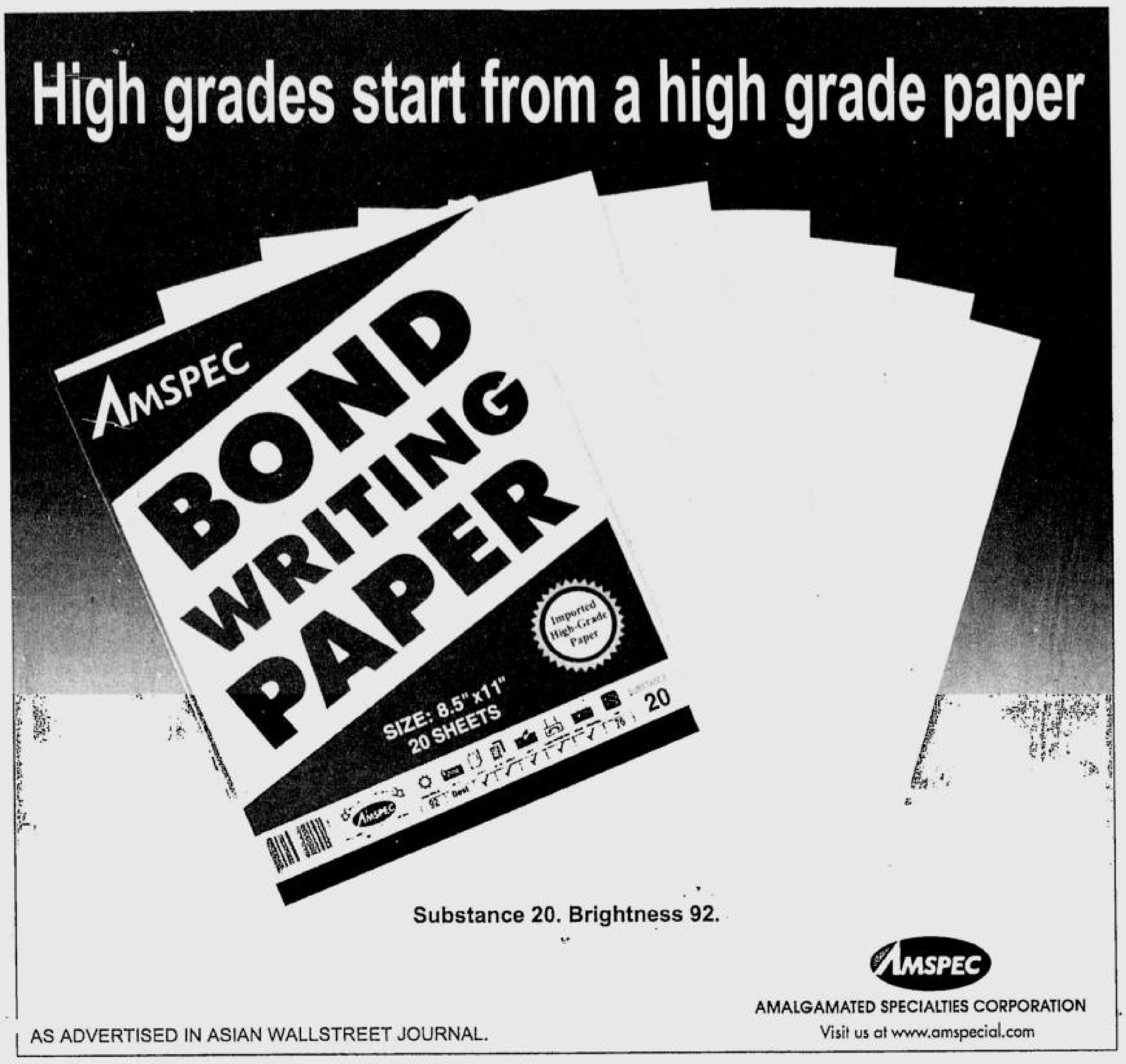
Benilda Morales, mother of Eldrin Morales who was one of the security guards abducted by the Abu Sayyaf, had begged the kidnappers to release her son.

Eldrin, 22, a native of Banga town, was an automotive graduate of the Aklan Polytechnic Institute in Kalibo. He had been working as security guard of the Dos Palmas resort for four years.

His brother, Jose Morales, is an Air Force sergeant based in Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

Hagedorn assured Eldrin's mother that he would provide financial and moral support to the hostage's family.

He said he was also willing to shoulder Benilda's traveling expenses if she wanted to go to Puerto Princesa to closely monitor the hostage situation. Hagedorn ran for Palawan governor in the May 14 elections and lost. *With a report from AFP*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Broadcaster . . .

(From page A1)

Candelario "Jhun" Cayona, 37, of dxLL Radyo Ukay, was on his Honda Dream motorcycle when he was attacked.

Cayona was hit in the head, arms, legs and body.

Supt. Mario Yanga, city police chief, said Cayona had just left his house at the Atilano Compound in Barangay Canelar when the gunmen, who rode on a red motorcycle, blocked his way and shot him.

Police recovered eight empty .45 cal. shells at the crime scene.

"(He) was not only a good and promising broadcast journalist but he was also a good friend. We will surely miss him," Bert Alejandro, a fellow dxLL reporter, said.

"Jhun was never afraid to shout on air about wrongdoings, particularly of those in government service," Rene Palayo, who works at Radyo Agong, said.

Cayona started his career as a beat reporter of dxLL-AM radio station here in 1990. After the station closed, he joined radio dxRC of RGMA and became one of its hard-hitting commentators exposing government irregularities.

He transferred to dxRZ Radyo Agong, but went back to dxLL when it reopened last year. He handled several daily public affairs programs at dxLL.

David Noel Erasga, Zamboanga Press Club president, condemned the killing and urged police to get the perpetrators.

Bert Alejandro, Cayona's colleague, said the killing was the "end of democracy" in the city. "Every time we have good and brave announcers exposing anomalies, their mouths are shut with bullets," he said.

Death threats

Cayona had been receiving several threats through text messages and telephone calls.

The last message he got was: "*Jun, alam na namin kung saan ka nakatira. Nandiyan ka sa Canelar, sinusurvey ka na namin* (Jun, we know where you live. In Canelar. We are monitoring your movements)."

In Davao City, Guillermo Torres, president of the University of Mindanao Broadcast Network (UMBN), said Cayona's death was a blow to the broadcast industry. DxLL was bought by UMBN in 1999.

"We condemn the senseless killing of Jhun Cayona. He is one of Zamboanga's best anchormen and an asset to the corporation. We are saddened by his demise. We hope that the perpetrators will be brought to justice the soonest possible time," Torres said in a statement.

He said Cayona could have been silenced because of his fearless commentaries.

Media casualties

Cayona was the latest journalist to be felled by assassins' bullets in Mindanao.

On Feb. 12, 1996, journalist and human rights lawyer Ferdinand Reyes was shot and killed by a lone gunman inside his office in Dipolog City.

On March 20, 1996, INQUIRER correspondent Nash Maulana and former INQUIRER correspondent Ali Macabalang were wounded in an ambush in Cotabato City. Maulana was hit in the leg and Macabalang, in the nape.

On Feb. 15, 1998, former lawyer and radio commentator Odilon Mallari was gunned down by two men outside the gate of his house in General Santos City.

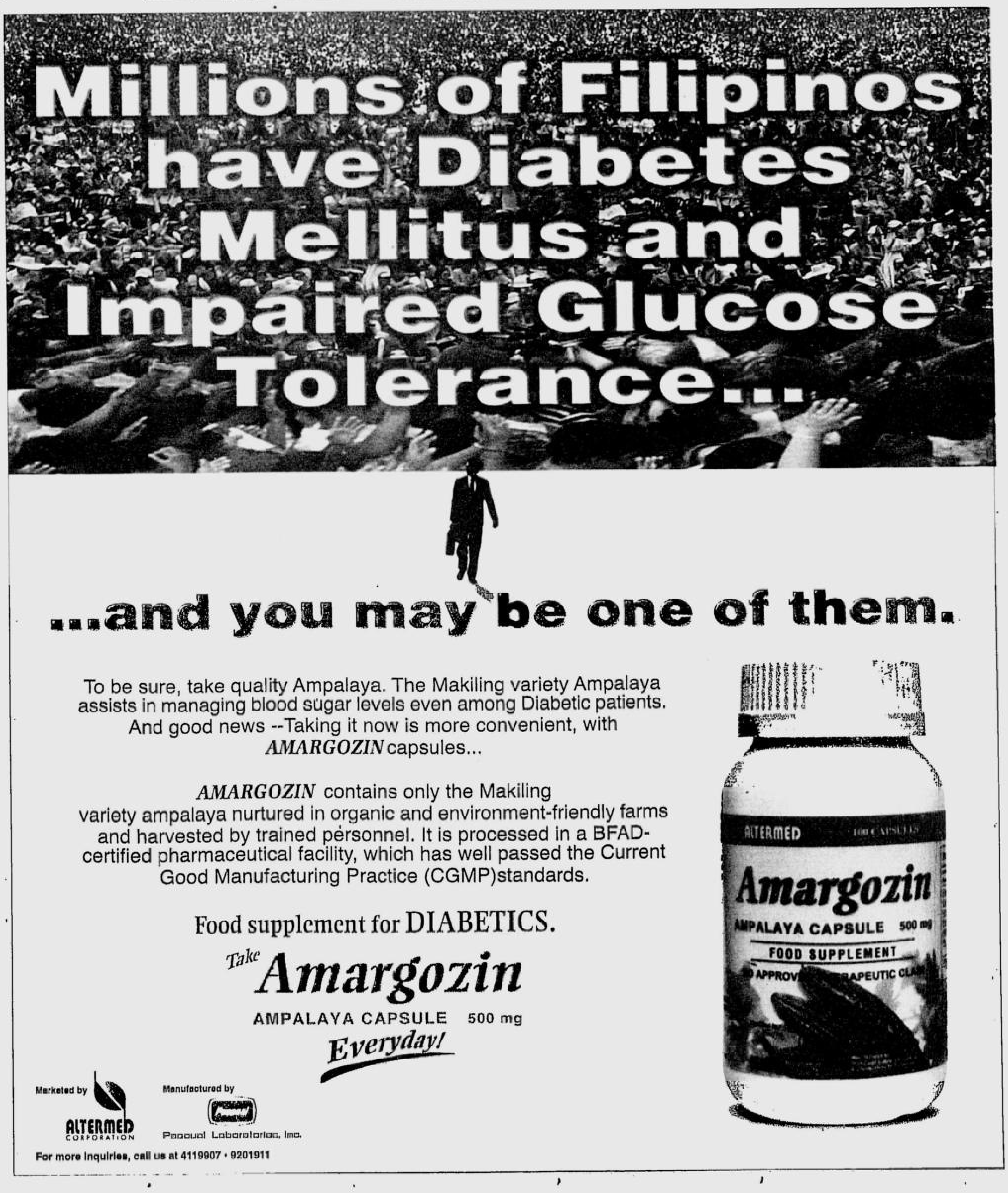
On March 3, 1998, radio commentator Rey Bancairin of dxLL in Zamboanga City was shot dead while he was airing his hour-long daily noontime program.

On April 16, 1998, radio reporter Nelson Catipay of the Radio Mindanao Network's dxMY was shot and killed by a lone gunman while he was inside a jeepney in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao.

On Jan. 2, 1999, Bienvenido Dasal, a reporter of dxKR Radyo Agong in Koronadal, South Cotabato, was shot and killed allegedly by a brother of a local policeman.

On Nov. 17 last year, radio commentator Olimpio Jalapit of Radyo Agong in Pagadian City was shot dead while riding on his motorcycle.

All the killings remain unsolved. ***With a report from Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***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US offers to help RP track down Sayyaf

(From page A1)

Director General Panfilo Lacson went to the United States last year to request for the surveillance equipment.

Because of the nature of the equipment, it was then US President Bill Clinton himself who had to approve the Philippine request, Maceda said.

"You can be sure, they (Americans) will assist in one way or another," he told a news forum in Manila.

Col. Joey Mendoza, a military spokesperson in Western Mindanao where the Abu Sayyaf operates, said US assistance through its satellite tracking system would be "a big help."

Washington

Washington has expressed keen interest in the case after an Abu Sayyaf spokesperson threatened Tuesday to kill some of the 20 hostages when Ms Macapagal ruled out negotiations and ransom payments.

She instead offered a P100-million price on the heads of the kidnappers and sent the military to go after them.

Hours later, the US state department called for the immediate release of all the captives and reiterated its policy of not paying ransom.

"All of the hostages should be released immediately, safely and unconditionally," Phil Reeker, US state department spokesperson, said in Washington.

He said Manila "has the lead in resolving" the hostage crisis.

Earlier, the daughter of Guillermo Sobrero, one of the three American hostages, called on US President George W. Bush for help.

"I want President Bush to do something about this," Aimee Sobrero told ABC television.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits are also holding American Christian missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham, longtime Philippine residents who were originally from Kansas.

Brig. General Edilberto Adan, Armed Forces spokesperson, said Manila and Washington were exploring possible "areas of cooperation in information and intelligence gathering."

Adan did not say what information the United States could have on the Abu Sayyaf, which has been kidnapping foreigners and Christians in Western Mindanao for years.

But he said the kidnapping of three Americans had prompted agents of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation to closely monitor the case.

"Just standard procedure," Adan said of the FBI's move.

Senators

Senators welcomed the US offer to help the government in hunting down the kidnappers.

"That's inevitable, considering that Americans have been abducted. America usually goes out of its way to protect its citizens," Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said.

But Pimentel added US assistance should be limited to "technical support" and that Americans should not be allowed to take part in military ground operations.

Senate Majority Floor Leader Francisco Tatad agreed that the government should set restrictions on US involvement.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national security and defense, welcomed the use of US satellites—but not surveillance flights—in tracking down the kidnappers.

"We can run into problems with the Constitution," Biazon said, referring to its provision banning foreign troops in Philippine territory. ***With reports from Dona Pazzibugan and Armand N. Nocum***

'It's possible they have reached Sulu'

(From page A1)

Arreceffi Beach Resort in Puerto Princesa City owned the items.

Adan said that the hostages' families were supportive of the government's no-negotiation policy, and that a "family support center" had been put up to assist them.

"They trust that the government is doing the right thing to effect the rescue of their relatives," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has designated Justice Secretary Hernando Perez as her personal emissary to the hostages' families.

Her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Perez had been directed to meet with the families twice a day, hourly if necessary, to update them on the progress of the government's operations and to ease their anxiety.

The meetings, which started Tuesday, are held behind closed doors in compliance with the President's request for a news blackout on the abduction.

'Adventurism'

Perez told reporters that he had urged the families not to worsen the situation by engaging in "adventurism" or "performing individual acts of trying to save the hostages."

"There was no indication that they are willing to pay," he said in a press conference yesterday. "We informed them that it will not be good to pay ransom."

In an interview over radio RMN, Jasmine Montealegre, an aunt of 8-year-old hostage RJ Recio, expressed her family's support of the government's no-negotiation stance. But she aired an appeal to the Abu Sayyaf to immediately release the child.

Montealegre's sister and brother-in-law, Angie and Raul Recio, and another sister, Divine Montealegre, are among the hostages.

Speaking from Cathedral City, California, the daughter of American hostage Guillermo Sobrero called on US President George W. Bush for help.

"I want President Bush to do something about this," Aimee Sobrero told ABC television in Washington Tuesday. "I know he can do it."

"We haven't heard from Guillermo at all. We don't even know if he is alive," said the hostage's brother, Alberto Sobrero, who added that his family had not been contacted by US authorities.

"We are worried. We haven't slept in three days," he said, adding that another brother, Pablo Sobrero, was on his way to the Philippines via Puerto Rico.

Attempted landing

Military sources, who asked not to be named, said the bandits had attempted to land at Sulu but were turned back because of a naval blockade.

This jibes with Adan's claim that the bandits might still be in the vicinity of Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi.

But at about 4 p.m. Monday, Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya announced on radio that the hostages had been divided into two groups of 10 persons each and taken separately to Sulu and Basilan.

This was bolstered by a report made by the Police Regional Office of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The report, submitted by ARMM police director Senior Supt. Akmad Omar, said that about 9 a.m. Monday, the 20 hostages and their captors arrived in two speedboats at Sitio Gulangan Luppoh in Barangay Jinggan in the coastal town of Panglima Estino in Sulu.

It said an Abu Sayyaf group led by Hernafi Sahibul and Albadir Parad, along with 22 followers, were herding the hostages.

Adan, however, said ground troops were still verifying the report.

"We are not denying the claim that they are in Jolo, but we are verifying it," he said. "There has been no indication that they are in Jolo or Basilan."

Adan took pains to explain why, four days after the abduction, the military had yet to pinpoint the location of the bandits and their hostages.

"We are not denying we have limitations. But the terrain and geography are different. This is not Luzon," he said, adding:

"There are hundreds of villages that our soldiers have to walk through. It takes time. We hope to fix their location as soon as possible."

Adan said the bandits could have hidden their captives in any of the "1,000 islands and islets" in the Palawan, Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi or Sulu island groups.

In the Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi area alone, he said, "we're talking here of more than 100 islets to search."

Adan also said the military had identified the masterminds of the Dos Palmas raid as Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadafy Janjalani, spokesperson Abu Sabaya, Galib Andang alias Commander Robot and Mujib Susukan.

He named the others as Ustadz Sherhata, Tuan Hadzmie and Ustadz Ummul.

Tiglao said disinformation on the location of the bandits and their captives was being spread through text messages.

He said the messages, which he himself had received on his cell phone, were meant to confuse the military and were possibly being sent by supporters of the Abu Sayyaf.

"It shows that they have people (doing these things). That is why, while I can speak about the policy, only General Adan is authorized to talk about the military operations," Tiglao said in a dzRH interview.

Flyers

In a move to gain public support, the military will distribute flyers to residents of known Abu Sayyaf strongholds in Sulu and Basilan.

"We need the support of the civilians for information gathering. That is such a large area north to northwest, that is such a large ocean," Col. Jose Mendoza, Southern Command media bureau spokesperson, said in Zamboanga City.

The flyers, which were also distributed to journalists who attended the briefing at the Southcom headquarters yesterday, contained the names and photos of known Abu Sayyaf leaders.

At Camp Aguinaldo in Manila, an inter-agency body—composed of representatives of the AFP and the social welfare, health and tourism departments—has been formed to serve as support mechanism for the hostages' families.

"The families are glad we have something like this," Adan said. "They will not have to go to Sulu."

Among the services offered by the center are counseling and situation updates.

The Department of Health on Tuesday started "debriefing" some of the hostages' relatives and friends to help them cope.

Dr. Consolacion Aleta of the DOH National Mental Health Program heads the team of experts.

"The team was sent to Camp Aguinaldo to help ease the families of the hostages of mental trauma and relieve their psychological stress. This is the DOH contribution to the support center," said Dr. Marisa Ricardo, executive assistant to Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit.

The President had ordered the setting up of the support center to guide the hostages' families through their ordeal.

"There would be cases wherein some family members would feel they are to blame for the abduction of their loved ones. Coupled with the sensationalized news of the crisis, there would surely be psychological and emotional stress," said one expert.

"Others could have been there when the attack happened, but failed to do anything to save their relatives. This would surely take its toll," he said. ***With reports from Juliet L. Javellana, Rocky Nazareno and Norman Bordadora in Manila; Julie Alipala-Inot, and Jonathan F. Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Agence France Presse***

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76ers forsake practice; Bucks seek adjustment

PHILADELPHIA — Allen Iverson went to see a dentist. Eric Snow went for an MRI. Tyrone Hill went to Cincinnati to see his ailing father.

With three of their top six players dealing with their latest set of problems, the Philadelphia 76ers decided to forsake having a formal practice Tuesday—just as they've done every day since mid-February.

Holding a conventional workout went out of style in Philadelphia months ago when its season of high highs and low lows was merely in mid-tumult. Tuesday was yet another day of watching video, doing some stretching and taking inventory of who was in what state of disrepair.

"I've never seen a group like this that has had so many things happen, and they all thrive on it," said coach Larry Brown, who spent a few minutes lobbing alley-oop passes to the likes of Rodney Buford, Todd MacCullough, Jumaine Jones and Raja Bell after the Sixers returned home following their victory Monday over the Milwaukee Bucks that tied the Eastern Conference finals 2-2.

Game 5 in the best-of-seven series is Wednesday night (Thursday morning in Manila).

Iverson, who had his tooth dislodged when he was struck by Ray Allen's elbow late in Game 4, was fitted for a mouthguard that he may or may not wear in Game 5.

Snow was wearing a walking cast on his right foot after spraining his ankle. He had surgery on the same foot earlier this season, but this newest injury is unrelated.

Hill flew to Cincinnati to be with his father, Eddie, who has had two diabetes-related strokes in the past two weeks. His status for Game 5 was uncertain, Brown said.

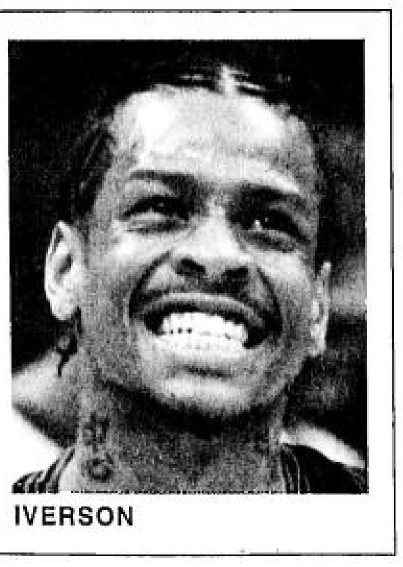
The Bucks held a practice in Milwaukee, where coach George Karl offered his typically loquacious commentary on a variety of subjects including the changed nature of the series, the quality of the officiating and the mental state of his team.

The Bucks have allowed the 76ers to dictate the pace of the games, turning it into a slowdown, defensive-minded series that plays to Philadelphia's strengths.

The 76ers were more physical with the Bucks over the holiday weekend, getting away with as much clutching and grabbing as they could to hinder Allen and Glenn Robinson.

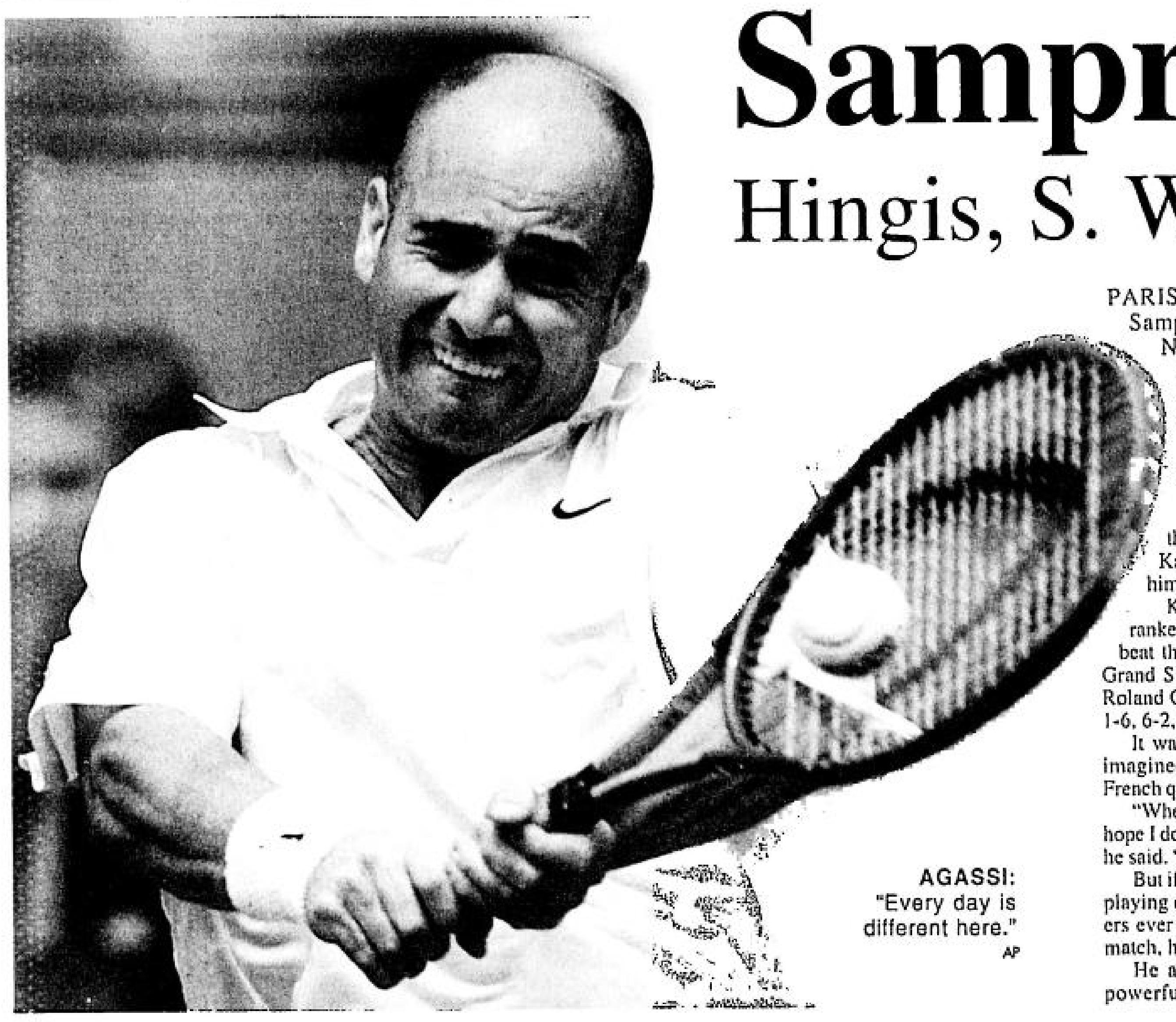
Robinson complained afterward that he hasn't taken a foul shot in the entire series, while Allen accused Aaron McKie of throwing a cheap shot elbow to his midsection.

The 76ers, for their part, felt that Allen's elbowing of Iverson was intentional, and both teams wondered whether the referees would call things closer the rest of the series. *AP*


IVERSON

Sampras escapes ax

Hingis, S. Williams pull through


AGASSI: "Every day is different here." AP

PARIS—Imagine playing Pete Sampras at the French Open. Now imagine stretching him to five sets and three times closing to within a point of victory.

You'd think you were dreaming.

So did Cedric Kauffmann.

"During the warm-up, I thought it was still a TV screen," Kauffmann said. "I usually see him on TV."

Kauffmann—a virtual unknown ranked 250th in the world—almost beat the man who holds a record 13 Grand Slam titles in the first round at Roland Garros before going down 6-3, 1-6, 6-2, 3-6, 8-6.

It was a close call few could have imagined, including the 25-year-old French qualifier.

"When I went to bed I thought, 'I hope I don't look too bad on the court,'" he said. "You're kind of scared."

But if Kauffmann was nervous about playing one of the greatest tennis players ever in only his third official ATP match, he didn't let it show on court

He answered Sampras' famously powerful service and forehand with speedy returns and successfully outrallied his opponent from the baseline.

SAMPRAS

"I gave 100 percent," Kauffmann said. "I didn't lose the match, he won it."

On each of his match points, the former University of Kentucky student stayed calm, although at one point he thumped his chest with a clenched fist to show how hard his heart was beating.

"I thought I could win. It didn't happen. Like I said, I'll wake up tomorrow and I'll feel fine," he said.

Sampras closed out the match when Kauffmann hit his final forehand wide. The fifth-seeded American grinned in relief as he congratulated his opponent.

Andre Agassi and Jennifer Capriati had an easier time Tuesday, winning their opening matches in straight sets.

Agassi, who won the French Open in 1999, beat Sweden's Thomas Johansson 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 (5).

"Every day is different here," he said. "It's all about making sure that you are physically and mentally ready. It's not easy, but it never has been."

Capriati, seeded fourth, overcame seven double faults in defeating France's Emilie Loit 6-2, 7-5.

Capriati and Agassi are seeking their second Grand Slam titles of 2001 after winning the Australian Open in January.

Top-seeded Martina Hingis breezed through her opener, eliminating Spain's 47th-ranked Gala Leon Garcia 6-1, 6-0.

No. 6 Serena Williams overcame a shaky second set to beat France's Sarah Pitkowski 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-1 under the watchful gaze of sister Venus and father Richard Williams. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Carino takes limelight

INTELCO'S JP Carino grabbed the spotlight in round four of the 2001 Shell Super Kart Championship Series after the clerk-of-course penalized erstwhile winner Uwe Madamba of ARC Racing one position down in the KT Light finals held last Sunday at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Cavite. Carino, who checked in second, was declared the winner by Pika clerk-of-course Gabby Intengan. Madamba was relegated to second place to reverse the position he gained after accidentally nudging Mike Bautista in midrace. Meanwhile, Bautista and third round winner Donovan Yu were each meted a fine of P5,000 and given a stern warning by the race officials for offensive driving. Jeremy Marquez kept his championship hopes alive by salvaging third spot.

SC favors disabled golfer

WASHINGTON—Disabled golfer Casey Martin may use a cart to ride in tournaments, the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday, saying federal law requires a leveling of the playing field for the handicapped, even in pro sports. The decision means the PGA Tour must make allowances for Martin, whose degenerative leg ailment makes it almost impossible to walk an 18-hole course. The PGA Tour fought Martin for years, saying all pro golfers must walk because uniform rules are essential for the integrity of the sport. Accommodating Martin with a golf cart will not fundamentally change the game, Justice John Paul Stevens wrote for a 7-2 majority. *AP*

Spy cameras vs cheaters

BELFAST, Northern Ireland—Judges at next week's amateur boxing World Championships will be watched by spy cameras to see if they are cheating. While the officials watch the boxers, the same technology used at the Sydney Olympics will monitor the performance of the judges to make sure they are scoring correctly by hitting the right buttons. The cameras are being used at the Worlds for the first time as Belfast's Odyssey Arena stages the June 3-10 event. The last Worlds, held two years ago in Houston, Texas, were marred by the withdrawal of the Cuban team, including heavyweight great Felix Savon, over judging controversies. Amateur boxing has been dogged by biased scoring over the years and the events in Houston were just the latest example. *AP*

Godolphin hope out

LONDON—The Dubai-based horse racing stable Godolphin suffered another blow on Tuesday when its main hope for next week's English Derby, Celtic Silence, was pulled out after suffering a leg injury. The 3-year-old son of Celtic Swing was a 16/1 shot for the biggest prize in British horse racing. His withdrawal from the field follows the unexpected death of Dubai World Cup winner Dubai Millennium at age 4 on April 30, the enforced retirement of a 1,000 Guineas runner up Muwakleh, and the poor showing of the stable's 3-year-old colts in the 2,000 Guineas. Celtic Silence suffered the injury on Monday and, trainer Saeed Bin Suroor was forced to withdraw him from the starters. *AP*

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Batang Bata 2. Sweet Inspiration 3. Chances Are

Race 2—1. Give and Take 2. Lucky Choice 3. Dona Josefina

Race 3—1. Sparkling Sky 2. Aya's Dream 3. Miggy 4. Main Street 5. Queen Jamie

Race 4—1. Extra Strength 2. Snake Dancer 3. Al's Princess 4. Yoko Lady

Race 5—1. Prince Armstrong 2. Bravada 3. Gracious Heart 4. Victory Task

Race 6—1. Prince of Africa 2. Show Money 3. Something Different 4. Rainmaker 5. Wings of Gold

Race 7—1. The Magician 2. Expose 3. Empire Girl 4. Final Verdict

Race 8—1. Sensible 2. Dynamite Jack 3. Khazan 4. Pep Up 5. She's So Sure 6. Red Hahn

Tiny seeks TRO to avoid eviction

By June Navarro

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines faction of Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal has sought another temporary restraining order before the courts of Manila.

But this time, the petition is directed at the Philippine Sports Commission, which issued an eviction order against Literal and his group last Tuesday.

The PSC gave Literal's BAP until today to vacate the premises located at the second floor of the PSC administration building inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The petition will be raffled off today at 11 a.m., simultaneous with the hearing of the TRO against the BAP elections filed by Literal on May 21.

PSC chair Carlos Tuason said he would consult his lawyers from the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel on what steps to take.

"If the OGCC lawyers advise the PSC to proceed with the eviction order, we have no choice but to enforce it," said Tuason.

Last week, Literal, through his lawyer Bonifacio Alentajan, lodged a petition before a Manila court praying for the stoppage of the BAP elections set on June 7.

The TRO rests on the sala of Judge Artemio Tipon of the Manila Regional Trial Court.

Meanwhile, athletics chief Go Teng Kok stands to receive a reprimand from the Philippine Olympic Committee.

The Ethics Committee of the Olympic body said it has found convincing evidence that Go meddled with the affairs of other NSAs such as basketball and weightlifting.

Davao Eagles aim high

DAVAOEÑOS can now truly call the Eagles their own.

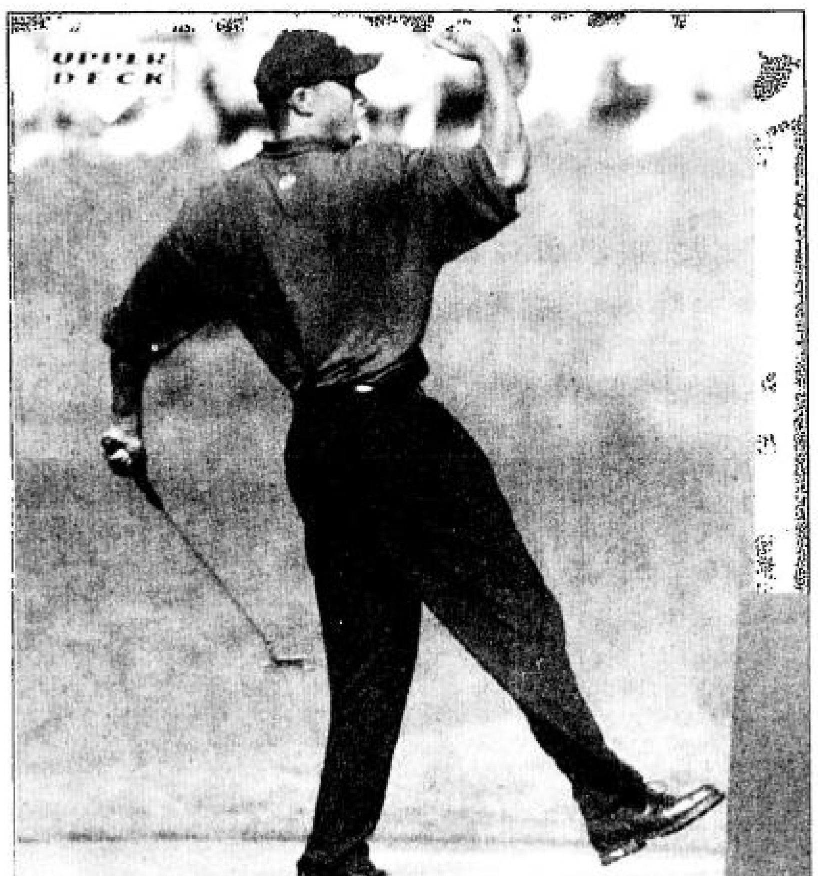
Rather than acquire players from other places, the management of the Davao Eagles has opted to go local for the First Phase of the MBA.

Of the 11 Eagles in the roster, seven trace their roots from Davao. And if negotiations push through, their 12th man would also be a Davaoeño—Alvin Teng.

"Davaoeños are very receptive of our scheme to get local players," said Davao coach Jun Noel, who took over from Francis Rodriguez.

Davaoeños in the fold are 6-foot Bong Marata, the lone returnee from last year's squad, former Cebu Gems Mike Manigo (5-10) and Richard Caliao (6-3), varsity stalwarts Peter June Simon (6-0), Dennis Concha (6-2) and Chris Jatico (6-4) and Erian Daja (6-4).

Meanwhile, MBA games will be held Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays and televised over PTV 4.



TRADING CARD

Tiger Woods is featured on this Upper Deck trading card, part of the first major set of trading cards in golf. Woods will be the centerpiece for the 640-card that will be launched on June 13, the day before the US Open.

AP

Derby semis tonight

NINE Filipino bets, each with two victories, are the early pacesetters of the highly-successful "Mandaluyong Coliseum International 9-Cock Derby" which will have its semifinal round (3-cock) beginning at 6 tonight. More than 50 fights are on tap.

Paying patrons are again advised to keep their ticket stubs since they may exchange them for complimentary Casino Filipino bonus bet certificate equivalent of the ticket price at the concierge section of all Metro Manila Pagcor-Casino Filipino branch.

Tonight's frontrunners are derby co-host Vic Yu (Sir Vincent and King Boxer), Ucap president Butch Macasaet (AA BJ Greenwood), Boyboy Roa (PBRJ Farm), Tony Tan (Fatman Swin), R. Pamatmat (RFP Argem Coliseum), Louie Cua and Boy de Roca (LCC 555), *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan) and Madlambayan brothers (Clear Cut JLC).

Expected to bounce back are the Americans and their Filipino partners who split their matches like Buddy Mann and Mauro Prieto (Mann), Chuck Berry and lawyer Ram Lopez (Altuz Blu Duc).

For other inquiries, please contact 534-4110, 531-4003, 531-4005 and its new number 535-2341.

Ong top favorite in Subic Grand Prix Sunday

THE 2001 Petron Grand Prix resumes with the third leg this Sunday, June 3, with Ferdinand Ong, Monching Gutierrez, Menchie Francisco and Mikko David hoping to keep the lead in their respective categories at the Subic International Raceway.

Ong, lead driver of Rota-Speedwelle-Outlast Battery, will stake the lead in the centerpiece Blaze super saloon category against veterans Nilo Pazcoguin of Tom's-Auto Trend and Kookie Ramirez of Petron-SRA.

Ong, who won three of the first four races, is enjoying a 10-point lead over Pazcoguin, 30-20, in the 14-part series organized by the Sports Values Inc. (SVI). Ramirez, who won the season-opening race, is third with 17 points.

Gutierrez, one of the mainstay of Gulf Oil-MP Turbo, is leading Tom Pastor and Allex Padua in the SVI Challenge Cup. Gutierrez has a four-race aggregate of 36 points against Pastor's 22 points and Padua's 14-points.

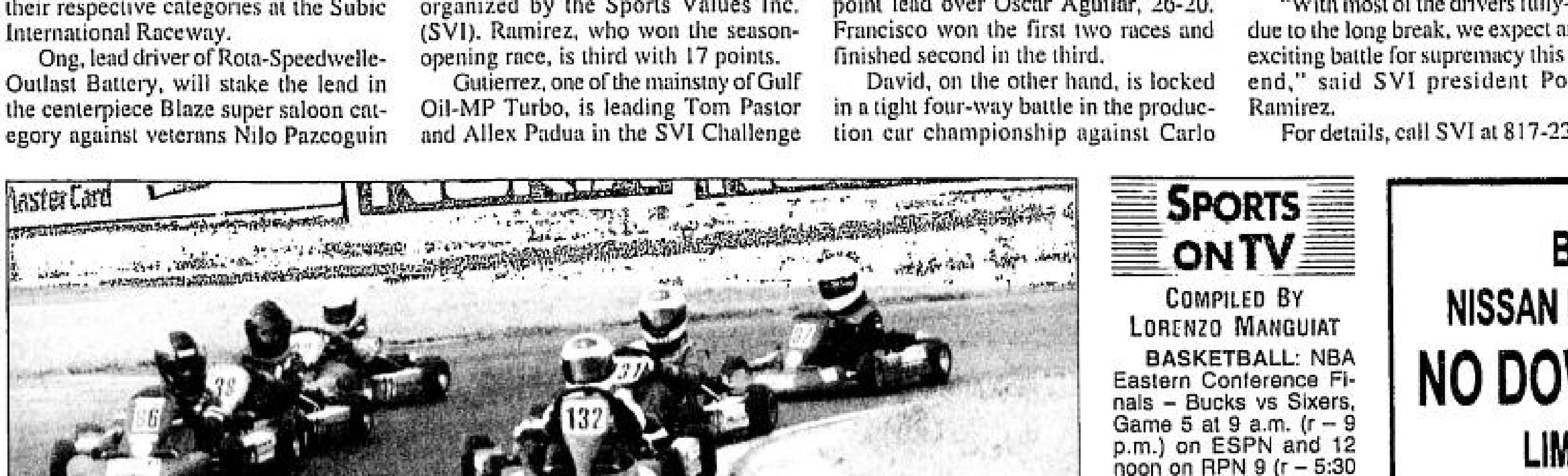
Francisco, one of only two female drivers in the registry, is nursing a six-point lead over Oscar Aguilar, 26-20. Francisco won the first two races and finished second in the third.

David, on the other hand, is locked in a tight four-way battle in the production car championship against Carlo Pastor, Carlos Anton and Enzo Pastor.

David has 27 points built on two victories against Pastor's 23 points and Anton's 22 points. The younger Pastor is running a close fourth with 20 points.

"With most of the drivers fully-rested due to the long break, we expect another exciting battle for supremacy this weekend," said SVI president Pocholo Ramirez.

For details, call SVI at 817-2241.



KARTING ACTION

The participants in the cadet 85cc category, led by Tyson Sy (86) of Demvel's and Mark Bumgarner (132) of MP Turbo, are shown in action during the fourth leg of the Shell Super Karting Championships at the Carmona Racing Circuit in Cavite. Sy won over Bumgarner and Mika Anton. The fifth leg is set June 10.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Eastern Conference Finals – Bucks vs Sixers, Game 5 at 9 a.m. (r – 9 p.m.) on ESPN and 12 noon on RPN 9 (r – 5:30 p.m. on IBC 13)

TENNIS: 2001 French Open - Day 4 Elimination at 5 p.m. (r - tomorrow at 1 a.m.) on SkyCable 17

GOLF: PGA Kemper Insurance Open, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

HORSE RACING: Racehorse Digest at 12 noon (r) on ESPN

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CRUCIAL GAME

Ana, Welcoat clash today

Group A		
Shark	9	2
Welcoat	7	3
Ana Freezer	7	3
GIV	6	5

Group B		
PharmaQuick	7	5
Hapee	6	5
Montaña	4	8
Osaka	2	9
Ateneo-Pioneer	2	10

Games today: (Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Osaka vs Hapee Toothpaste
5:30 p.m.—Ana Freezers vs Welcoat Paints

BY DENNIS U. EROA

TITLEHOLDER Welcoat Paints and rejuvenated Ana Freezers clash anew today with the winner snatching the coveted twice-to-beat privilege in the semifinals of the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

The Welcoat-Ana tussle is set at 5:30 p.m., with the Freezer Kings hoping to avenge their 75-66 loss to the Paintmasters last May 12.

"I'm confident that Ana will show its true colors against Welcoat," said coach Rudy Mendoza, who is aiming to steer the team to the finals in his first year as head coach.

Ana, the league's smallest team, yielded to Welcoat's inside plays anchored on twin towers Yancy de Ocampo (6-foot-8) and 6-foot-9 Derick Canlas. Ana's zone defense also did not click as Ren Ren Ritualo boomed from the outside.

But Mendoza is unfazed. He noticed that the old Ana team showed up and beat GIV Beauty Soap, 87-73, last Tuesday. The win snapped Ana's two-game losing streak.

"Welcoat is a very strong team. But I am confident because Ana is armed with prayers and fighting hearts," Mendoza said.

The Paintmasters are riding high on a six-game winning streak, including a 71-66 win over Shark last May 26."Certainly, we want to get the twice-to-beat privilege. We're preparing hard because Ana wants revenge," said coach Junel Baculi.

Ana is pinning its hopes on 6-foot-4 Dondon Mendoza and Ariel de Castro to counter Welcoat's height and heft and advantage. The firepower will come from Ronald Tubid, Ariel Capus, Rey Mendez and Roland Pascual.

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METRO
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

■ Suspects in Marikina policeman's slay fall A22

■ P16 million for cleaning of esteros A22

Cop orders 3 men to kneel, shoots 1 dead

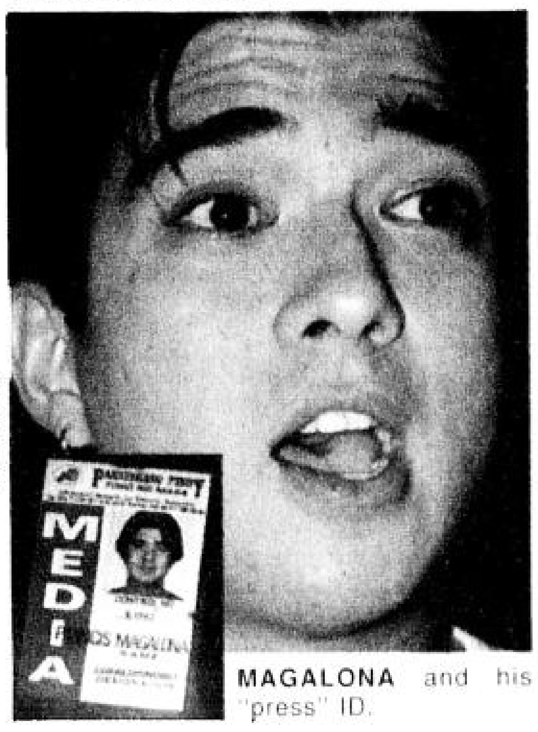
BY AGNES E. DONATO

A PASIG City policeman yesterday at dawn accosted three men for a trumped-up traffic violation, ordered them to kneel with their backs to him and shot two of them, killing one and injuring the other when they could not give him P2,000, according to the survivor.

Investigators said SPO1 Roberto Ortiz of the Police Community Precinct 3 in Karangalan Village in Barangay Sta. Lucia, Pasig, is now facing charges of murder, frustrated murder and attempted murder.

Police said Ortiz killed Rodel Bacolod, 31, with a single gunshot to the back of the head. Bacolod's companion, Fernando Giludo, 32, was hit in the left side of the face and is fighting for his life at the Pasig City General Hospital, police said.

COP/ A22


MAGALONA and his "press" ID.

Francis M arrested for smoking marijuana

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

RAP ARTIST and television host Francis Magalona is facing a drug rap after police arrested him and a companion on Wednesday for allegedly smoking marijuana in his car while it was parked on a street in New Manila, Quezon City.

Magalona, 36, of 1011 Cherry Woodlane Cottonwood Heights, Antipolo City, and his companion Alfredo de los Reyes, 31, of 42 Colonado St. in Barangay Ilaya, Barangka, Makati, were arrested after a brief car chase by PO3 James Bustinera and PO1 Miguel Cordero of the Central Police District Mobile Patrol Unit,

FRANCIS/ A22

Berroya agents charged with double murder

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday filed double murder and frustrated murder charges against 10 members of the PNP Intelligence Group for the killing of hotel executive Fernando Lozada, 48, and family friend Marian Uson, 18, and the wounding of Lozada's daughter on May 17 in Quezon City.

The charges were filed at the Department of

BERROYA/ A22

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Youth slain by mistake

By Alcuin Papa and Margarette Teodosio

A 20-YEAR-OLD man was shot dead by a security guard who mistook him for a thief at Pier 2 in Tondo, Manila on Wednesday.

Police said Adonis Pahinayang, a resident of San Luis II, Dasmariñas, Cavite, was shot in the left side of the chest and was declared dead on arrival at the Gat Andres Bonifacio Hospital.

The shooting happened about 11 p.m. Wednesday while Pahinayang, his live-in partner Jaquelyn Ferro and one Danilo Batiga were walking to a friend's house at Pier 4.

SPO1 Benito Ocampo of the Western Police District said an unidentified truck driver started to curse the three, thinking they were making fun of him.

The policemen said the unidentified driver attacked Pahinayang with a lead pipe. When Pahinayang ran away, the driver shouted, "Magnanakaw, magnanakaw (Thief, thief)," SPO1 Ocampo added.

An unidentified security guard manning a guard post, intercepted Pahinayang, held him by the shoulder and shot him once, the investigator said.

Pahinayang's wife brought him to the hospital but he died before receiving any treatment.

An investigator said the unidentified security guard "would not remain unidentified for long. Follow-up investigation will reveal his identity soon enough.''

Power forum

THE TOPIC of the National Press Club's Meet the Press forum tomorrow will be "The Power Reform Measure–The Final Word."

Invited to the luncheon forum to be held at the NPC Bldg. on Magallanes Drive in Intramuros are Senate committee on energy chair Sen. John Osmeña, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Reps. Arnulfo Fuentebella and Melvin Evalle, and Manila Electric Co. vice president for utility economics Rudy Quetua.

Also expected to attend the forum are Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz, Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association president Rizalino Culalic, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. president Pete Ilagan and a representative of the Center for Free Legal Counsel.

The revived Meet the Press is one of the projects of the NPC under president Louie Logarta.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 31, 2001
Feast of the Visitation

1st Reading: Zep 3:14-18
Gospel: Lk 1:39-56

Mary then set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, "You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!" And Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit exults in God my savior!

He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness, and people forever will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me, Holy is his Name!

From age to age his mercy extends to those who live in his presence.

He has acted with power and done wonders, and scattered the proud with their plans.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up those who are downtrodden.

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

He held out his hand to Israel, his servant, for he remembered his mercy, even as he promised our fathers, Abraham and his descendants forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary

Luke presents Mary of Nazareth, whom Francis of Assisi greeted to be the "Virgin made Church," to be sounding the revolutionary hymn of God's reign. She exalts the justice and mercy of God when the lowly, the poor, and the oppressed will be given their due, as God's beloved people. The song of Mary is, therefore, an indictment of the unjust relations existing in a globalized world today. It is also a summons to us the Church, typified by Mary, to make sure that we are on God's side; namely, for and with his poor ones. After all, how often have we proclaimed ourselves to aim at becoming a Church of the Poor?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (TORTS AND DAMAGES)—Actual damages—Actual damages, to be recoverable, must not only be capable of proof, but must actually be proved with a reasonable degree of certainty. Courts cannot simply rely on speculation, conjecture or guesswork in determining the fact and amount of damages. To justify an award of actual damages, there must be competent proof of the actual amount of loss, credence can be given only to claims which are duly supported by receipts. Considering that the actual damages suffered by private respondents were based only on a job estimate and a photo showing the damage to the truck, there is absence of competent proof on the specific amounts of actual damages suffered. Neither were the transportation and accommodation expenses during the trial supported by component proof, the lower court having relied merely on the unsubstantiated allegations of private respondents. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, Viron Transportation Co., Inc., v. Delos Santos, G.R. No. 138296, November 22, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

2 teeners shot dead in QC

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO teenagers, aged 16 and 18, were shot to death in two incidents in Quezon City on Tuesday and yesterday.

Rommel Capillas, 16, of Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, was killed for allegedly stealing clothes.

A bystander found Capillas' bloodied body at about 3 a.m. yesterday at the corner of D. Tuazon Street and Del Monte Avenue in Barangay San Jose.

Capillas suffered a gunshot wound in the back of the head, according to Senior Insp. Ruel Vacarro of the Scene of the Crime Operatives.

The victim also had a nasty cut on the face, police said. His body was brought to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory for autopsy.

About 11 p.m. Tuesday, Esrom Escobio, 18, was shot dead by an unidentified gunman in front of his house at 473 Agham Road, Barangay Pag-Asa, police said.

Escobio was standing in front of his house when the unidentified man, who was carrying a handgun, came chasing two men, said SPO1 Rodrigo Barrameda Jr. of the Central Police District Homicide Division.

Authorities theorized that Escobio feared that the gunman would shoot him so he ran with the two other men.

The gunman shot Escobio, police said.

Escobio died at 11:43 p.m. before he could be brought to the East Avenue Medical Center, police said. He suffered four gunshot wounds in the body.

Four hours before the shooting of Escobio, police found the body of a man near the North Avenue station of the Metro Rail Transit on Edsa.

The victim had gunshot wounds all over the body, police said. He was between 30 and 35 years old, about 5-foot-6, and of medium build.

The man was wearing denim pants with a black belt, a denim polo shirt with a blue collar, brown shoes and white socks, said case investigator PO2 Joseph Diño.

The man also had Bahala Na Gang tattoos on the right buttocks and Joy-Bobby-BNG on the back.

Police also found a nine-inch knife tucked in the victim's belt.

Suspects in Marikina policeman's slay fall

By Agnes E. Donato

TWO of the seven suspects in a jeepney robbery where a Marikina policeman was shot dead last Monday were arrested by the Pasig City police Tuesday afternoon.

Arrested were Vicente Roncales, 26, and Eduardo Llamera, 28, both of Sitio Tanglaw, Barangay Bagong Nayon in Antipolo City, according to Supt. John Sosito, Pasig police chief.

Randy Galla, 21, who allegedly shot dead PO3 Victor Santiago while the policeman was chasing the robbers on busy Marcos Highway, was able to escape, Sosito said.

The four other at-large suspects were identified as Domingo Escalla, Jonathan Bermundo, David de la Torre and Joey Valdez.

Sosito said the arrests were made after witness Sonny Rapada identified one of the suspects in the suspects' photo gallery of the police.

This was confirmed when an informant reported that he overheard Galla bragging about his being a good shot in his neighborhood in Kalye Buang.

"I fired only one shot but I was able to hit him in the chest," Galla was quoted as telling his neighbors.

About 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, members of the Pasig police went to the hideout and nabbed Llamera and Roncales while they were coming out of an alley.

Neighbors apparently saw the policemen and tipped Galla and his other cohorts about it, giving them a chance to escape.

In his haste, however, Galla left behind his .38 caliber revolver and six live bullets.

The gun, which bore no serial number, was reportedly the one Galla used in killing officer Santiago.

Charges of robbery with homicide, illegal possession of firearms and deadly weapons and violation of the Commission on Elections gun ban will be filed against the seven suspects.

'Blackout' in Pasay

PASAY City police have imposed a news blackout on its investigation of the disappearance over the weekend of the local Land Transportation Office's daily collection amounting to at least P213,000.

Except for admitting the ongoing investigation, Pasay police are tightlipped about any development in the investigation, giving rise to speculation that they have become part of a conspiracy to whitewash the case.

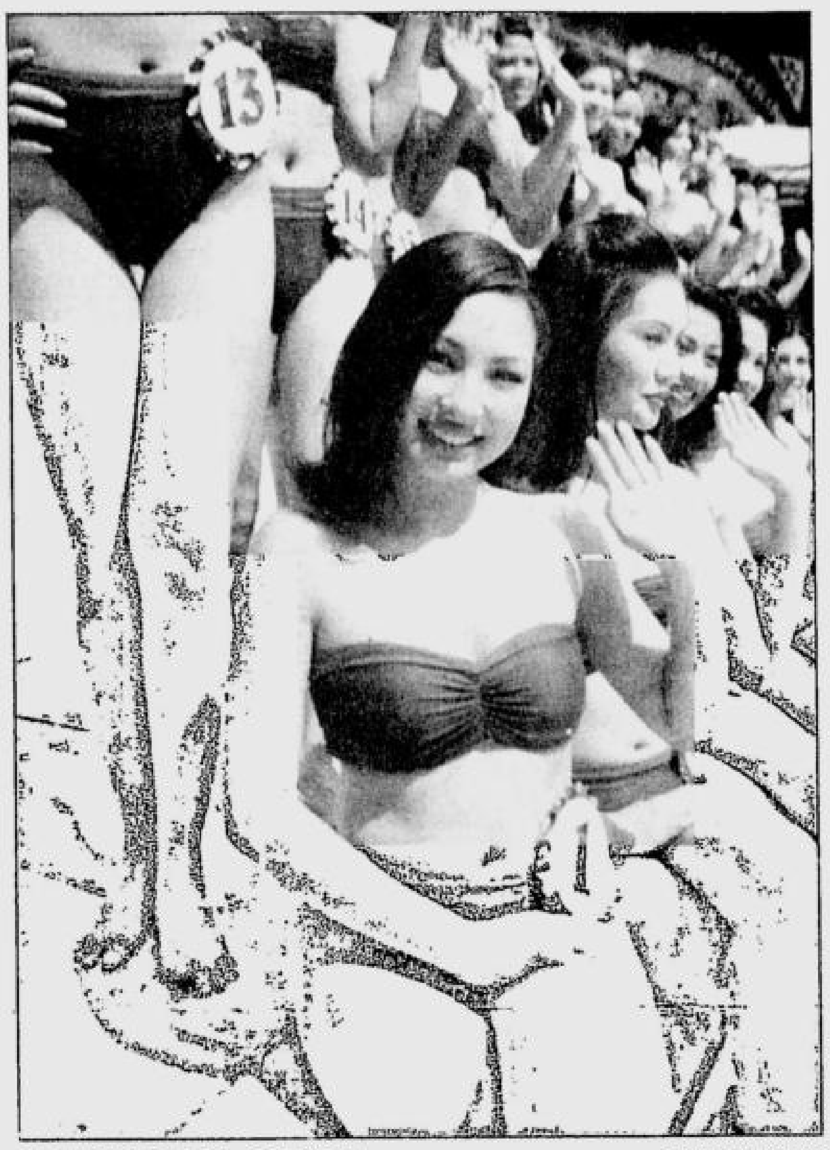
Insp. Aurelio Binamira, Pasay City police chief investigator, said they would issue a press statement after concluding their investigation. He said they are careful not to cause undue alarm to any LTO personnel.

Source in the Pasay City police said the disappearance of the cash was reported Monday morning by LTO cashier Marilyn Sulapare, 45. The source added that Sulapare discovered the loss after she opened the vault.

Investigators noted that the last person seen inside the cashier's office, where the vault was located, late Friday afternoon was Leonila Almonte, another LTO cashier, who is now being questioned.

"It appears that whoever took the money had access to the cashier's office and knew the vault's lock combination," one investigator said.

Reporters covering Pasay City deplored the refusal of the police and LTO personnel to give details about the incident. *Nelson F. Flores*



MAIDENS OF MUTYA EDWIN BACASMAS

Twenty-five young women, including at least one from California, make up the 34th batch of the Mutya ng Pilipinas beauty contest, which now counts television network GMA as its partner. The top winner will compete in the Miss Asia-Pacific Quest while the four runners-up will join other international pageants. The grand coronation night will be held on June 9 at the NBC Tent and will be aired on GMA.

Berroya agents . . .

(From page A21)

Justice against Insp. Edgar Iglesia, Chief Insp. James Mejia, Senior Insp. Edwin Portento, Inspectors Preston Bangangan, Cesar Percival Pangda and Christine Tabdi, and PO1s John Bolatin, Arnold Solas, Cherilyn Tundayag and Frederick Taala.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco did not include in the rap sheet the head of the Intelligence Group, Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya.

Wycoco said the NBI was only concerned with the policemen's criminal liabilities

"It's up to the PNP to establish the administrative liabilities (of Berroya and his men)," Wycoco said in a news conference yesterday.

As IG chief, Berroya could be charged administratively under the principle of command responsibility since he has direct supervision over the PNP Intelligence Operations Division.

All 10 policemen are detailed with the IOD, but their mother unit is the PNP-IG.

In yesterday's conference, the lone survivor and chief witness to the crime, Clarissa Frances Lozada, 17, told reporters how her father, who was the chief steward of the New World Hotel, and her friend Uson were killed.

Clarissa said that at the intersection of Del Monte and Araneta avenues in Quezon City, her father, Uson and she were terrified when armed men tried to stop their car.

She said her father, who was driving their blue Mitsubishi Lancer, sensed danger and drove through the blockade.

Clarissa said she and Uson became more terrified when the men started to chase their car. She and Uson thought that criminals, and not policemen, were after them.

"They continuously fired on us," said Clarissa, who survived with only minor injuries.

Lozada was hit and the chasers managed to block the car near Maria Clara Street, Clarissa said. As soon as the car stopped, it came under a hail of gunfire again, she said.

Lozada died on the spot, hit in the head and the body. Uson, who was also hit in the head, was declared clinically dead when she arrived at a hospital. She died three days later.

Clarissa said that when the shooting stopped, the IG men, led by Pangda and Taala, slowly approached the car. They smashed the window on the driver's side to open the car, but were surprised to see two young women inside, she said.

Clarissa claimed Taala took her cell phone when she tried to call her family She said she was then taken to the Capitol Medical Center in Quezon City.

Based on documents submitted to the DOJ, the IG agents, backed by a unit from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, were going after the kidnappers of Mark Harris Bacalla, 23, and had set up the blockade on Del Monte and Araneta avenues.

Bacalla, the son of a former Quezon City judge, was later killed by his captors, according to the documents.

At the corner of Del Monte and Araneta, the IG agents mistook Lozada's car for the escape vehicle of Bacalla's kidnappers and began to chase it.

The suspects are now being held in Camp Crame after PNP chief Leandro Mendoza suspended them from service on Monday.

With the filing of the charges, Wycoco said the case may be considered solved.

"As far as we are concerned, the case is now solved," he said. "The rules of engagement and command responsibility are internal to the PNP. These were clearly violated."

Lozada's wife Clavell hailed the NBI for solving the case in a week's time. She thanked Wycoco and the PNP for their efforts to pin down her husband's killers.

"I'm sure justice will be served," she told reporters at the news conference yesterday.

She also cited instances when the suspects tried to intimidate her and her family.

"(The IG agents) sent my daughter's business card to my cell phone to let us know they had my daughter's phone," Clavell said. "The harassment continued until the phone was recovered from one of the suspects."

Wycoco said eight civilian witnesses and seven policemen were willing to testify against the 10 IG members.

Originally, 11 IG agents were implicated in the case. But lawyer Oscar Embido, chief of the NBI Intelligence Special Operations Division, subpoenaed only 10 agents. He cleared an Inspector Yee, who was earlier linked to the killings.

P16M not enough for estero cleanup

By Agnes E. Donato

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) must clear all *esteros* in the metropolis before the rainy season to prevent floods. But the agency only has P16 million in funds for the cleanup.

MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday said the P16 million allotted for the agency is quite small considering the number of clogged waterways it has to clean up.

He said, however, that "we will coordinate with the local government units on (the clearing of *esteros*)."

Flood control is now the responsibility of the MMDA after the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) agreed to gradually turn over the job to it

But for now, only the clearing of the *esteros* would be the MMDA's task, Abalos said. The construction of drainage and the dredging of clogged rivers would come later, he said.

The cleanup drive was also raised during a Tuesday night meeting of Metro Manila mayors with some Cabinet officials at the Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

Abalos and the mayors also discussed in the meeting the plight of th informal settlers along the riverbanks and the MMDA chair warned mayor and barangay captains that they would be sanctioned if they allowed squatter to occupy again the areas that have a ready been cleared of dwellers.

Abalos also vowed to relocate settlers living along *esteros* and promised incentives for the squatters to keep the areas clean. He said he was willing t pay P1,000 each squatter family to keep the *esteros* clean.

"It will take time, probably a year o so, to clear all the *esteros* of squatters, s this is what we will do for now," he said.

An MMDA report showed there a 81,074 informal settlers in the enti Metro Manila and in nearby suburb like Rizal and Cavite.

A total of 27,998 informal settle are found in cities north of Manila lik Caloocan, Valenzuela and Malabon a Navotas town, which are always hit b floods during the rainy season, according to the report.

In Quezon City alone, the numb of squatters has reached 17,948, whi Manila has 11,306 informal dwellers, th report said.

Cop orders . . .

(From page A21)

The third man who was able to escape was engineer Lawrence Mata, 26, a co-worker of Bacolod and Giludo at the Mayukins Construction firm.

Investigators said the shooting happened in front of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority impounding area on Ortigas Avenue Extension in Pasig at about 3:30 a.m

The three men were on board a white Isuzu Elf truck driven by Bacolod. They were on their way to their company headquarters in Barangay Lamuan, Marikina when a police mobile with body number E-231 cut their path.

Mata told police that a policeman, who turned out to be Ortiz and who was apparently drunk, got off the police car and approached them. Ortiz pointed his 9mm pistol at the driver and asked him for his license, investigators said.

Bacolod told the policeman he had only a traffic citation ticket since he had been apprehended for a traffic violation earlier. Bacolod then offered the policeman P100 just so they would let him and his companions go, Mata told police.

"But he (Ortiz) told us that P100 was not enough and asked us for P2,000 instead," Mata said.

When they could not produce the cash, Ortiz instructed them to board th police car. Instead of taking them to police station, however, he made the get on and off the car three times wh he insisted that they produce th money.

Mata quoted Ortiz as telling them Filipino, "We can't settle this if y don't have P2,000 but I can settle it ev if I have to kill you."

Mata said the last time they we made to get off the car, the policem ordered them to kneel down in a ro with their backs to him.

Ortiz then shot Bacolod, Mata sa Just before Ortiz fired at Giludo, th latter turned to look at the policem and got hit in the left side of the fa Mata said.

Mata said he was able to stand a run. Ortiz fired at him but did not hi him, Mata said.

He said he hid in a grassy lot un the sun came up. At about 7 a.m., h went to the Pasig police station and re ported the shooting.

Ortiz did not resist arrest when oth policemen came for him at PCP-3, bu he refused to talk about the allegatio against him.

Chief Supt. George Alino, Easte Police District director, ordered the d arming of Ortiz, who is now detained a the Pasig police station.

Francis M arrested . . .

(From page A21)

said investigator PO3 Joel Sanchez.

Investigation showed that the policemen spotted Magalona and De los Reyes allegedly smoking dope inside a black Honda CRV (WJM-835) at about 6 p.m. Wednesday.

The car was parked near the corner of 4th and Doña Hemady streets in Manila, police said.

When the policemen approached the car and confronted its occupants, Magalona tried to escape by driving away, investigators said.

During the brief chase, Magalona's car even bumped into the police vehicle, police said.

The chase ended after the policemen shot a tire of Magalona's car, halting the vehicle on Sta. Cecilia Street near E. Rodriguez Avenue also in Quezon City, police said.

Magalona and De los Reyes were brought to the office of the CPD Drug Enforcement Group in Camp Karingal

Police said they found on the two men an improvised tooter, dried marijuana leaves, and two sticks of marijuana

These were brought to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory for examination.

Magalona and De los Reyes are facing drug charges that could be filed with the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office

Magalona first became known as an actor in the '80s who played quirky rebel roles in youth-oriented movies. He survived a career slump and surged into pop popularity with his rap hit "Mga Kababayan Ko" in the early '90s.

As pop icon, Magalona earned the monicker "Master Rapper" with his string of rap hits dealing with nationalism, world peace, youth power and Filipino values. A former VJ of MTV Asia, Magalona is a mainstay host of the noontime show "Eat Bulaga."

No Tobacco Day at UP

TO show its wholehearted support for the World Health Organization's "World No Tobacco Day," UP Manila is holding activities at the PGH Quadrangle and at the Museo Pambata today.

From 8:05 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. at the Philippine General Hospital, the UP Manila Healthy University Program will be launched by Chancellor Alfredo T. Ramirez.

The No Smoking Policy is a project of the comprehensive Smoking Prevention and Control Program, one of the 11 subcommittees of the UPM Healthy University Program.

The Healthy University Program, the first in the country, is adopted from WHO's Health-Promoting Schools

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6	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
SM CENTERPOINT		7149522 • 7161416
1	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
2	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
3	DTS	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	DOLBY SURROUND	TRAFFIC
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANGEL EYES
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CUT AWAY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
SM CITY FAIRVIEW		9350749
1	DOLBY SURROUND	TRAFFIC
2	DOLBY SURROUND	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
3	DOLBY SURROUND	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANGEL EYES
5	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CUT AWAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
12	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
SM CITY MANILA		5239240
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANGEL EYES
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	CUT AWAY
3	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASURA 2001
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	TRAFFIC
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
12	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR		8820950
1	ULTRA SURROUND	MAPAGBIGAY
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
SM MEGAMALL		6331801 • 6329401
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TRAFFIC
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CUT AWAY
SM CITY NORTH EDSA		9295452
1	DOLBY SURROUND	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
2	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CUT AWAY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	TRAFFIC
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
7	DTS	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
10	DOLBY SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
12	DOLBY SURROUND	VALENTINE
SM SOUTHMALL		8066888 • 8066782
1	ULTRA SURROUND	TRAFFIC
2	ULTRA SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	CUT AWAY
5	ULTRA SURROUND	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VALENTINE
7	ULTRA SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	ANGEL EYES
9	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
10	ULTRA SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
TUTUBAN CENTER		2514302
1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
SM CEBU		2313876
1	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	DEMON GATE
3	ULTRA SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PILAK
5	ULTRA SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
6	ULTRA SURROUND	LUCKY NUM,BERS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THWE MUMMY RETURNS
SM ILOILO		3209422
1	ULTRA SURROUND	PILAK
2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
4	ULTRA SURROUND	LUCKY NUMBERS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	CROUCHING TIGER
SM PAMPANGA		7128015
1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	TRAFFIC
3	DOLBY SURROUND	KAMASUTRA 2001
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALIKTARAN
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS

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1	ALAS DOSE
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	CARTA ALAS
4	CUT AWAY

GLORIETTA 4

1	ANGEL EYES in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	TRAFFIC in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	THE MUMMY RETURNS THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	ALL THE PRETTY HORSES (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film
5	SOMEONE LIKE YOU in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	THE MUMMY RETURNS in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	CUT AWAY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	ALL THE PRETTY HORSES (Phil. Premiere) in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	ANGEL EYES in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE June 8-9 9PM Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS THX in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	ANGEL EYES in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	THE MUMMY RETURNS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	ALAS DOSE in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	CUT AWAY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	TRAFFIC
2 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3 (DTS)	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
4 GOLD (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	ANGEL EYES
6 GOLD (SDDS)	CUT AWAY
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8 [illegible]	CARTA ALAS
9 [illegible]	SPY KIDS
10 [illegible]	ALAS DOSE

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	CARTA ALAS
2	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
3 (DTS)	SAY IT ISN'T SO
4	
5	QUILLS
6 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	ALAS DOSE
2 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	CARTA ALAS

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831 6603

1	ALAS DOSE
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	CARTA ALAS

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	ANGEL EYES
2	ALAS DOSE
3	CARTA ALAS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	KAMASUTRA 2001

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	ALAS DOSE
2	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	CARTA ALAS
6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	ANGEL EYES
8	CUT AWAY

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 / 892.3349

1	TRAFFIC

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	BALIKTARAN
2	EXIT WOUNDS

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	CARTA ALAS
3	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	CARTA ALAS
A	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ALAS DOSE
3	CARTA ALAS
4	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	ALAS DOSE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	CUT AWAY
5	KAMASUTRA 2001
6	CARTA ALAS
7 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
9 (DOLBY)	ANGEL EYES

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	ALAS DOSE

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	ALAS DOSE
2	ALAS DOSE
3	CARTA ALAS
4 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	TRAFFIC
6 (DOLBY)	ANGEL EYES
7 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ALAS DOSE
3	KAMASUTRA 2001
4	RESERVE
5 (SDDS)	ANGEL EYES
6	CUT AWAY
7 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	CARTA ALAS

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	ALAS DOSE
2	CARTA ALAS
3 (DTS)	CUT AWAY
4	SPY KIDS
5 (SDDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	ALAS DOSE

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	ALAS DOSE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	FEMALE ANIMALS
Lords	CARTA ALAS
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	ALAS DOSE
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	RESERVE
4	CARTA ALAS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	ALAS DOSE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	CARTA ALAS
3	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT
4	ALAS DOSE
5	ANGEL EYES

New Divisoria Mall CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	ALAS DOSE
2	CARTA ALAS
3	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
5	DALAWA SI EBA
6	MASARAP UNANG KAGAT

Baclaran LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	ALAS DOSE
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	CARTA ALAS
4	
5	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	CARTA ALAS
2	ALAS DOSE
3 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	ALAS DOSE
2 (DTS)	VALENTINE
3 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	CARTA ALAS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	CARTA ALAS
2	CUT AWAY
3	ALAS DOSE
4 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ALAS DOSE
3 (DTS)	VALENTINE
4	CARTA ALAS
5	THE POSSESSED

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	CARTA ALAS
3	ALAS DOSE

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	CARTA ALAS
3	ALAS DOSE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	BALIKTARAN
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	EVANGELINE 14

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511 9736

1	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ALAS DOSE
3	CARTA ALAS

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	CARTA ALAS
2 (DTS)	ALAS DOSE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	ALAS DOSE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ALAS DOSE
2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	CARTA ALAS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	ORAS NA PARA LUMABAN
2	THE POSSESSED
3	TRAFFIC
4	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	CARTA ALAS
2	ALAS DOSE

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	CARTA ALAS
2	TRAFFIC
3	ALAS DOSE
4	THE MUMMY RETURNS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
2	ALAS DOSE
3	CARTA,ALAS
4 (DTS EX)	TRAFFIC

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❶ THE MUMMY RETURNS
❷ KAMASUTRA 2001
❸ CARTA ALAS
❹ CUT AWAY
❺ ALAS DOSE
❻ TRAFFIC
❼ ANGEL EYES

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❸ TRAFFIC
❹ ANGEL EYES
❺ ALAS DOSE
❻ UNDER REGULAR MAINTENANCE

BACOLOD
(034)441-0453

❶ THE MUMMY RETURNS
❷ 3,000 MILES TO GRACELAND
❸ TRAFFIC
❹ SPY KIDS
❺ ATTACK FORCE
❻ UNDER REGULAR MAINTENANCE

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ALAS DOSE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	CARTA ALAS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	ANGEL EYES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	TRAFFIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KAMASUTRA 2001
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	CARTA ALAS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	UHAW SA INIT / ONE NIGHT STAND
ODEON	ALAS DOSE
ODEON-2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
ROBEN	CARTA ALAS
TANDEM-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
TANDEM-2	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
TIMES	LOST / HARD BULLET
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	CARTA ALAS
QUEZON-1	CARTA ALAS
REMAR	ALAS DOSE
REMAR-2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-2	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
CINEMA-2	CARTA ALAS
CINEMA-3	KAMASUTRA 2001
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-6	VALENTINE
CINEMA-7	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-8	NARINIG MO NA BA ANG LATEST
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ANGEL EYES
CINEMA-12	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-14	CUT AWAY
CINEMA-15	ALAS DOSE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-2	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-3	ANGEL EYES
CINEMA-4	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-5	CUT AWAY
CINEMA-6	THE MUMMY RETURNS
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA . . .
CINEMA-2	WANTED GRO
CINEMA-4	SWEET NOVEMBER
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	BODY TO BODY
CINEMA-2	LAGARISTA
CINEMA-4	BAIT

Top bands invade Republic of Malate

SURVIVAL Café of the Republic of Malate is not only for poetry readings. Starting this month, get a load of the best bands in town.

Majam, a slang word that means a group that jams a lot, performs every Tuesday. Majam's soprano vocalist plays a mix of classical and standard jazz. Aside from the usual bass, guitar and piano, the group also uses *sitar* (an Indian flute) and *tablas* (an Indian percussion), making their music more distinct.

Every Wednesday, get high on blues and poetry with Jun Lopito, Dexter Lansang and Jaimie Wilson.

Experience the intense performance of Cynthia Alexander on Thursdays.

Feel the groove and burn hot with R&B, pop and hip-hop with Make Your Mama Proud on weekends (Fridays and Saturdays).

The Republic Dance Club, meanwhile, has its own set of performers that will drive you to the heights of musical euphoria.

Witness a combination of world music Pinikpikan takes center stage tonight and on June 7 and 14.

Rock icon Lou Bonnevie returns to Survival Café June 9 and 15.

All live performances at the Survival Café are for free, while the Republic Dance Club charges P250 which includes a drink (local beer, iced tea or softdrinks).

Shows start 9 p.m. Republic of Malate is at 1769 A. Mabini st., Malate, Manila.

For inquiries and reservations, call Headline Concepts at 551-7251 to 53.

The Venue presents Ai-Ai, Allan

THE VENUE, the newest and biggest entertainment hub in Davao, presents Ai-Ai de las Alas and Allan K, June 1 and 2.

The Venue is the place to go these days for party people who want to have fun. The bar is one-stop area for music lovers, sports fans (it is equipped with billiards and snookers tables, shuffle boards, bumper pools and gaming area) and coffee aficionados.

Since its opening last year, the bar has been the meeting place of Davao's yuppies, celebrities, even politicians — a testament to the place's popular appeal, according to Ayo G. Gunting, publicist of Venue.

For more details, call (082) 221-2915, or (082) 221-5748.

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Benicio Del Toro
Catherine Zeta Jones

May 31 - Thursday
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8:50 PM - Traffic
11:30 PM - Traffic

PEARL HARBOR
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GET A COPY of the 4th issue of Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema featuring WOMEN IN CHINA

Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication.

Hear the Difference. Feel the Excitement

Michael de Mesa, Maegan Aguilar 'extra sweet' to each other

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

AS a self-confessed romantic fool, I'm saddened when I hear of relationships falling apart and of on-and-off romances. You just can't tell whether you are giving up too soon or holding on too long.

Take the case of **Michael de Mesa** and **Gina Alajar**, who have broken up for the nth time. I'm not one to jump to conclusions but maybe this e-mail would shed some light on the mystery.

"Dear Dolly Anne,

"I don't usually e-mail people I don't know. But somehow, I just have this urge to e-mail you regarding Michael de Mesa and **Maegan Aguilar**.

"I was strolling at Power Plant last night and I saw the two celebrities together. I assumed something's goin on between them 'coz they we're 'extra' sweet . . . and they would even tickle each other . . . in public! :)

"I'm not really expecting anything from this. Just my curiosity, I guess.

—Name withheld upon request."

Denials, anyone?

Guess list

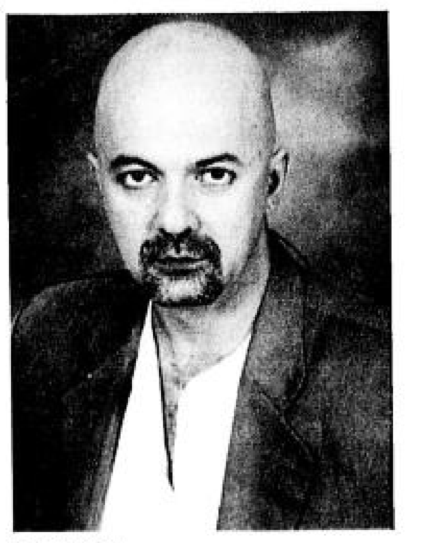
GUESS who this returning producer is who back-bites her own staff? She seems to get a kick out of making all her friends/associates fight. One of her staff members told me that after their current project is over, they would resign en masse. Even the star of the producer's show revealed that she's not too happy with the way Ms Backbiter is handling her.

Guess who this son of a famous couple is who courted two of the hottest young stars today but ended up with no one because the two girls found out about his modus operandi. He failed to lure show biz babes so now he's trying to fool pretty young things from other circles. Just like in a circle, what goes around comes around. Be ready for the boomerang, dude!

Guess who this comedian is who can't take no for an answer. He tried to make his moves on this sexy singer but the girl did not budge. That was a blow to his ego so his close friends in the biz have been sending the singer nasty text messages. She could not take it anymore so she changed her cell phone number pronto.

Text hex! Haven't we all had enough of that?

AGUILAR



DE MESA

'Day of infamy' remembered

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST May 27, the National Geographic Channel marked the 60th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor with a two-hour documentary, "Pearl Harbor, Legacy of Attack."

The special was an emotional viewing experience for older people who were alive when World War Two began.

For younger viewers, the documentary vivified an event they had not themselves experienced, but has also impacted on their lives because of the major changes that the war has effected on the Asian region.

And, for viewers of all ages, the docu retold a cautionary tale that urged everyone to do his best to prevent the breakout of a similar global conflict, no matter what the cost.

It was interesting to note that the production was about an event that happened six decades ago, and yet it still had its emotional moments. This was because the docu chose to view the attack on Pearl Harbor through the eyes of some of the people who had survived the Japanese airfleet's bombs.

It was a moving sight to see men now in their 70s and 80s breaking down as they recalled how their best buddies died on that "day of infamy," Dec. 7, 1941.

Also a decided plus was the inclusion of some eyewitnesses from the Japanese side, similarly old men who had their own gripping stories to tell. In addition, the docu made good use of footage on the attack taken by Japanese film cameras.

A weak element was the use of a "subplot" involving the search for the wreckage of a Japanese minisub that was involved in the attack. Since the two-week search proved inconclusive, one wondered why such a big deal had been made of it in the documentary.

Of course, one understood that it was also used as a "hook" to show the wrecks of bigger vessels, in mute testimony to the violence of the attack and the ravages of nature on the sunken hulks through the decades.

Yet another hook was the fact that the underwater search was being conducted by the same team that had found the wrecks of the "Titanic" and the "Brismarck," using some futuristic, state-of-the-art equipment.

Nice try, but the search element really didn't enrich the docu that much, and the time devoted to it could have been put to better use.

Despite this weak element, the production was able to hold viewers' interest and involvement with its recollection and analysis of the one-sided battle that instantly plunged the United States into war.

The big question was, how were the Japanese able to catch the world's most powerful Navy unaware? The docu provided some answers: the Japanese struck, where they were least expected to attack, not harbors and airfields in Asia, but the US Pacific Fleet's base in Hawaii.

Also, there were at least three incidents that could have alerted American troops to the possibility of an attack, but these were blithely ignored or explained away by careless underlings.

And there was a psychological explanation: in 1941, despite evidence to the contrary, Americans still regarded Japan as a small, inferior country that wasn't capable of doing the all-powerful US forces much harm.

Well, the well-planned attack on Pearl Harbor, which killed more than 2,400 American soldiers and destroyed 21 warships, showed how wrong some smug US leaders had been!

Jazzathon

AT 9 p.m. today, May 31, City Lite 88.3 presents its Urban Jazzathon at the Mall Park, Rockwell Power Plant. Featured are the soulful and funky performances of Parliament Syndicate, Passage and K-St.

'100 Songs of Mary Fee'

IRMA Adlawan does a monologue, "100 songs of Mary Fee," on July 14 and 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the National Museum. The Tanghalang Pilipino stage piece is based on **Tony Perez**'s translation of portions of Fee's "A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines."

Fee was an American educator in the Philippines during the first decade of the 20th century.

Side A performs at new QC venue

QUEZON City will celebrate a night of great music on June 14 (Thursday), when Side A band performs in a special concert at the three-story Padi's Mindave in Mindanao ave., Quezon City. Traffic Jam band will book-end the Side A performance. The concert is a project of Mindave Entertainment Corp.

Side A is composed of Joey Generoso (vocalist), Naldy Gonzales (keyboardist), Kelly Baldon (lead guitarist), Joey Benin (bass guitarist) and Ernie Severino (drummer).

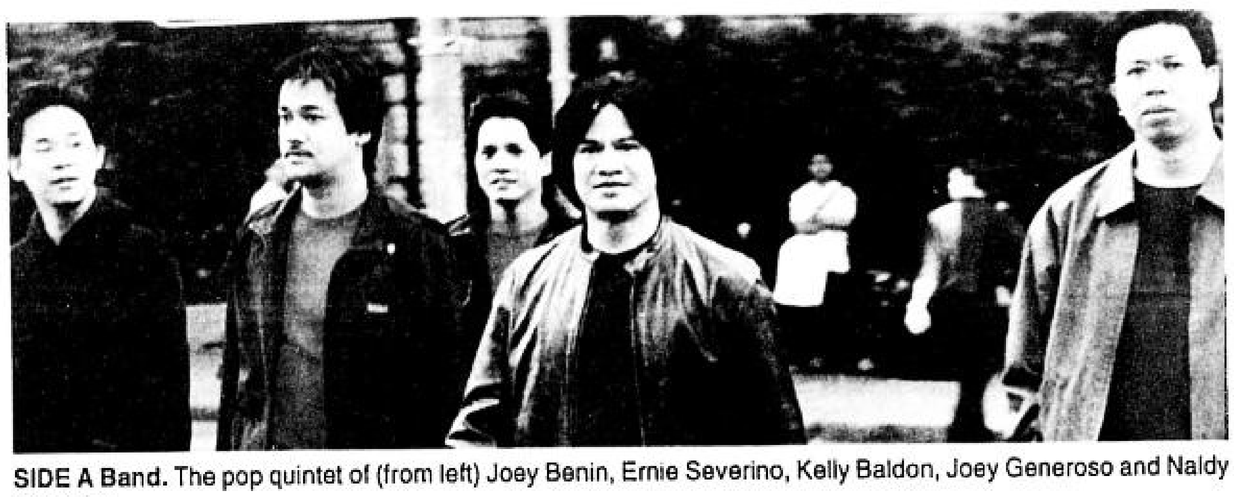
Padi's Mindave owner and Palanca Award-winning writer Wilson Y. Lee Flores admires Side A's repertoire of romantic ballads and their constant ability to reinvent themselves and their music.

In its 15 years of existence, the phenomenal Side A has reaped many gold and platinum awards. The pop quintet performed in the wedding of Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzales in Baguio City last Monday, when they sang the couple's favorite song, "Forevermore," one of their biggest hits.

In June, the country's top live bands will perform every night at Padi's Mindave—Pido With Take One (Mondays), Mulatto (Tuesdays), Fat Session (Wednesdays), Parliament Syndicate (Thursdays), SPI and Ascension bands (Fridays), Traffic Jam and Pop Cycle (Saturdays), DV8 (Sundays).

In the casual dining area on the ground floor, Mindave Entertainment Corp. has invited talented female and male singers such as the Power of 3 and Boco Jam among others to perform relaxing acoustic music.

Padi's also invites singers to join its search for new singing superstar. For details, call 453-0080 or 414-4930 to 34 or 925-3117.



SIDE A Band. The pop quintet of (from left) Joey Benin, Ernie Severino, Kelly Baldon, Joey Generoso and Naldy Gonzales.

Hollywood actors on ABC 5 in June

ABC 5 beats rainy day blues with certified hit specials and movies.

The Bee Gees will open the month with a bang as the popular trio of brothers Barry, Maurice and Robin Gibb, is featured on "Friday Box Office," June 1, 10:30 p.m. The Bee Gees will talk about their new album, "This is Where I Came In" (released locally by MCA-Universal).

Heartthrobs Chris O'Donnell, Matt Damon and Bendan Frasier come together in a school opening salvo, "School Ties," June 4, 8 p.m.

The Bee Gees returns for another exciting concert with "One Night Only," June 9, 9 p.m.

ABC also brings viewers to Hawaii with two back-to-back specials – "Miss Hawaiian Tropic" and "Britney Spears in Hawaii," 9 p.m. on June 16.

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MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 1:10, 3.50, 6:30, 9:10	CUT AWAY - P 13 12:10, 2.35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10

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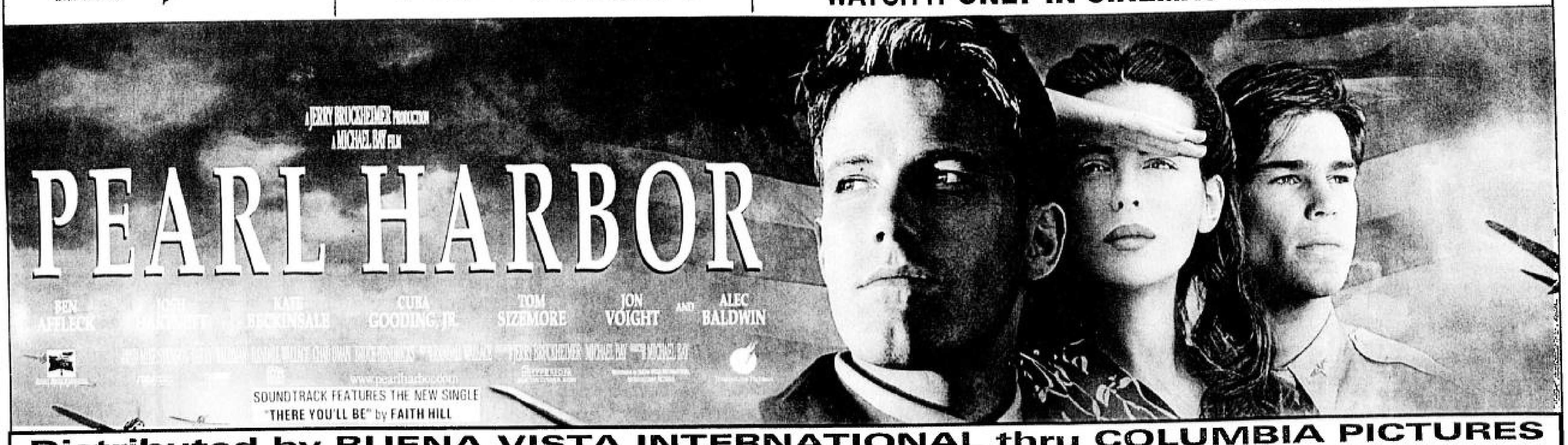

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World War II epic going great guns at box-office

LOS ANGELES—"Pearl Harbor" won an easy victory at the North American box office, debuting as the No. 1 film with $75.1 million over the four-day weekend.

The heavily hyped World War II epic fell short of setting individual box-office records, but it helped lift Hollywood to an apparent record-breaking weekend.

The overall box office was on target to beat the all-time high of $183.7 million set last Memorial Day weekend, when "Mission: Impossible 2" debuted. The top 12 movies alone grossed $176.6 million this weekend, up 3 percent from the same holiday weekend last year.

The final tally will not be available until Tuesday, when weekend grosses for all films are counted.

"Pearl Harbor" had the second-best Memorial Day opening ever, behind the $90.2 million gross for "The Lost World: Jurassic Park" in 1997.

Last week's top film, the computer-animated "Shrek," slipped to No. 2 but had an impressive second weekend, grossing $ 54.2 million, according to studio estimates Monday.

"Shrek," featuring the voices of Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz and Eddie Murphy, has taken in $110.7 million in just 10 days, passing "Chicken Run" as DreamWorks' top-grossing animated film.

"The Mummy Returns" took third place with $19.1 million, pushing its total to $170.7 million. The sequel passed the $155 million taken in by "The Mummy" in 1999.

"Pearl Harbor," "Shrek" and "The Mummy Returns" each is on track to top $200 million. That would equal the number of films released in all of 2000 to hit that mark, with many potential blockbusters still to come this year.

"This is just the beginning. It's going to be a big year," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

Made by the action-adventure team of producer Jerry Bruckheimer and director Michael Bay ("Armageddon," "The Rock"), "Pearl Harbor" stars Ben Affleck, Kate Beckinsale and Josh Hartnett.

The film spins a love triangle involving the three, culminating in the fiery attack on Pearl Harbor.

Some analysts had speculated that "Pearl Harbor," though

generally slammed by critics, might break the record set by "The Lost World" or even hit $100 million in its first weekend.

"You know, the competition always tries to raise the

expectations of the press, so that when the numbers come in, all you can do is fail," Bruckheimer said. "For us, this is enormous success."

The film's running time, just more than three hours, precluded any box-office records, said executives at Disney, which released "Pearl Harbor."

"You heard so many people saying it was going to do upwards of $90 or $95 million. That was just unrealistic because of the length of the movie," said Robert Bucksbaum, a box-office analyst for Reel Source Inc.

It was the best opening ever for a three-hour movie and the biggest debut for a non-sequel. It was also a corporate record for Disney, outpacing the studio's "Toy Story 2," which pulled in $80.1 million over the five-day Thanksgiving weekend in 1999.

"It's the nicest way to address the critics," said Chuck Viane, Disney's head of distribution. "You do it with grosses."

In limited release, the Nicole Kidman-Ewan McGregor musical "Moulin Rouge" continued playing to sellout crowds. In its second weekend, the movie took in a remarkable $254,000 in just two theaters in New York City and Los Angeles.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Monday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

1. "Pearl Harbor," $75.1 million.
2. "Shrek," $54.2 million.
3. "The Mummy Returns," $19.1 million.
4. "A Knight's Tale," $9.3 million.
5. "Angel Eyes," $6.3 million
6. "Bridget Jones' Diary," $4 million.
7. "Along Came a Spider," $2.2 million.
8. "Memento," $1.9 million.
9. "Blow," $1.3 million.
10. "Driven," $1.2 million.

AP

BEN Affleck (center) and Josh Harnett are pilots who survey the destruction of the battleships in the epic drama, " Pearl Harbor."

LYN Sherman of Ugoy-Ugoy Band belts out a song during the party.

New website launched in ROMA bash

HUNDREDS of people filled the Republic of Malate (ROMA) on A. Mabini in Malate recently to celebrate the launch of GetAsia.com.ph.

GetAsia.com.ph is an interesting way to view Manila through the Internet. The site is actually the second coming of Localvibe.com after it was acquired by GetAsia.com, Asia's premier website network.

GetAsia.com.ph has more than 10 times the content of Localvibe.com and with far more advanced features.

GetAsia.com.ph offers 11 different channels from the arts to sports and even sex and relationships. If you don't know what to do on a Friday night, or you're looking for a new restaurant to try out or just searching for the latest movie schedules, GetAsia.com.ph is the place on the Internet to check out.

The launch was set into motion by VJ Mike Zerrudo and featured performances by Bo Razon and Puro Ritmo, Grace Nono, Brownman Revival, Pinikpikan and Ugoy-Ugoy.

GetAsia.com Philippines is managed by the team of editor in chief Miguel "Chuck" Syjuco, marketing manager Bernice Arcenas, sales manager Jet Lacson, IT manager Aye Navarro and sales manager Dennis Javier. GetAsia COO John Mims and CEO Kenny Felberbaum were also present.

Logging in to the fun were NBK's Teddy and Janine Dario, NU 107's Atom Henares, Pulp Magazine's Vernon Go, Karen Kunawicz, Chalk Magazine's Romina Urra, event organizer Tim Yap, Miko Pascual of BAT and Smart's Miles Inocentes.

Entrepreneur-martial arts expert stars with Filipinos in Toto Natividad movie

MARTIAL arts expert and entrepreneur Genta Ogami is now also an actor.

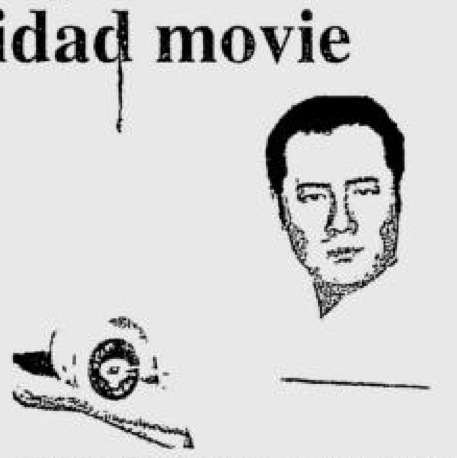
In the movie "The Lords of Creation," Ogami stars with Filipino actress Joyce Jimenez, plus a host of local and foreign actors.

Ogami plays a Japanese martial arts expert who is tasked by a divine voice to fight evil and save Asia. His journey takes him to the Philippines where he meets Maria (Jimenez), the forlorn daughter of Señor Alonso who has sold everything he has, including his daughter, to the obnoxious Big Bill.

Shot entirely in the Philippines, "The Lords of Creation" is directed by Toto Natividad. It is scheduled for release within the year.

Ogami says that through his private organization, the GO Group, he aims to help others. Under his umbrella organization are several companies, including G. Cosmos Philippines, which helps people improve their lives by offering them business opportunities.

"With this movie, I hope to reach out to people from all walks of life, to encourage them to make a difference and make this world a better place to live in," says Ogami.



DIVINE GUIDANCE sends Genta Ogami's character to fight evil.

Kuh Ledesma leads performers in benefit show for Tondo poor

KUH Ledesma, Side A Band and the New Version gospel group, formerly known as the New Minstrels, are performing in a benefit show in June for Lydia's Helping Hand.

Lydia's Helping Hand is a non-profit and non-government organization established in April 2000 to help the poor families of Tondo, Manila through education, family development and livelihood.

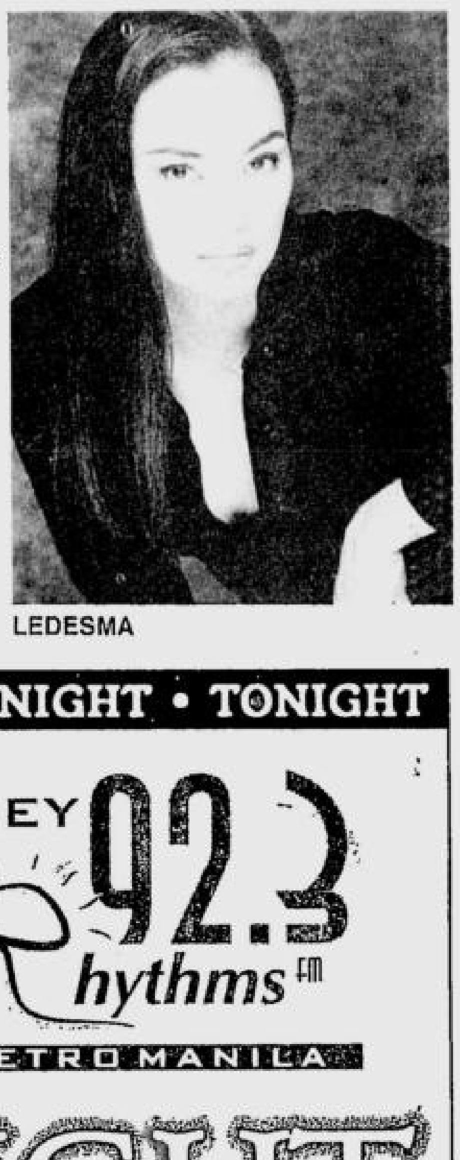
The group is currently supporting 80 school children through scholarships. It is also putting up a mission center where volunteers conduct day-care classes, after-school-tutorials, tae kwon do and cultural dance lessons, medical and dental clinics, livelihood seminars and family and spiritual development classes.

The Bible in the Book of Acts introduces Lydia as a woman who responded to apostle Paul's teachings and who opened her house to the brethren.

The benefit show, titled "Mangarap Batang Pinoy," will be held on Friday, June 1, starting at 6:30 p.m. at Crossroad 77 at the corner of Mother Ignacia Avenue and Scout Reyes in Quezon City.

Every purchase of a dinner-and-show donor pass for P1,000 will bring one Tondo child to school for one whole month.

For inquiries, contact Jess Pimentel at 366-8515 to 16.



LEDESMA

Another Zaragoza sings

ANOTHER member of the Zaragoza family is on his way to achieving stardom, following in the footsteps of his sister Jessa, the gravelly voice behind the megahit "Bakit Pa."

The newcomer is Lloyd Zaragoza, who now has his own album. One track on the Star Records album that bears his name is "Dahil Ikaw Lamang," which is starting to sweep away listeners.

The 19-year old Lloyd says one of his goals is to establish his own identity as a singer.

"I am very proud to have Jessa for my sister but I am aware that people compare my career with hers," he says. "I think that's only natural but I really hope that someday I am acknowledged as a singer and not as Jessa's brother."

Lloyd started out in the business as a TV commercial model for such products as Juicy Fruit and McDonald's.

His 13-track album articulates the sentiments and feelings of young men his age. The album is basically lyric-driven and theme-oriented.

Says Allen Elgar of Star Records: "We are crossing our fingers. Lloyd deserves all the support he can get because he is so hardworking and very talented."

"Lloyd Zaragaza" the album available in CDs and cassettes in record bars nationwide.

LITTLE brother to Jessa, Lloyd Zaragoza hopes to be known as a singer.

Asin adds flavor . . .

(From page A26)

sang about in "Masdan Mo ang Kapaligiran" is actually happening now.

Several factors, both professional and personal, contributed to the scattering of the Asin members. The killing of Saro has got to be the biggest blow for the group.

But the artist in them refuses to die and, after years of separation, Asin is back. Much of the credit for the return should go to the Vicor executives.

The newest Asin album is called "Pag-ibig, Pagbabago, Pagpapatuloy." It is a continuation of the more than two decades of the Asian saga and advocacy. It is as if Asin and its followers never parted at all.

This is the eighth Asin album. It opens with a seven-minute overture of Asin's two decades of music. Fourteen certified Asin hits are rolled into one musical masterpiece, with a brilliant arrangement that uses ethnic instruments and guitars.

The banner song, "Ang Mahalaga," deals with the basic needs like food, shelter and jobs that man needs even as he strives to attain peace and unity.

"Panibagong Bukas" offers a glimpse of hope for peace and an end to chaos, rivalry and war.

"Sa Malayong Silangan" is the last song to have been written by Bañares, who had recorded it on a demo tape.

The jolting "Pagbabago" says:

"Nag-People Power I
"Nag-People Power II
"Ang buhay nati'y 'di pa rin nagbabago
"Nag-People Power I
"Nag-People Power II
"Ngunit hindi pa rin tayo natututo."
"Tayo ang pangharang sa tangke
"Tayo ang pambala sa kanyon
"Habang nag-aabang ang mga buwitre
"Naghihintay ng tamang pagkakataon.
"Kahit mag-Edsa III, kahit mag-Edsa IV
"Ang buhay nati'y 'di pa rin magbabago
"Kahit may People Power tayo ang talo
"Hangga't hindi tayo natututo."

Lolita, the main voice behind many of Asin's hits, still possesses that raspy, throaty, powerful singing voice. Music wizard Pendong Aban plays the acoustic rhythm guitar and also does vocals.

Together, Carbon and Aban continue to add their own peculiar flavor to Philippine music.

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Asin adds flavor to music again

By Remy M. Umerez

FOLK singers are of a different breed. For one, they will perform in venues where Pops Fernandez will never dare to tread.

In the '70s, the hottest hangout for lovers of live folk music was the Hobbit House in Malate. These days it is Bistro '70s on Anonas Road in Quezon City. The more accessible the venue is to people, the better it is for folk music. Never mind the ventilation.

Folk singers seem to worry little about their mode of dressing and couldn't seem to care less if their hair badly need a shampoo. It's the songs that matter most to them.

Their songs say a lot about where they stand regarding particular issues. Their singing is tantamount to the late Lino Brocka's fighting for freedom of expression.

One singing group that became popular for their "socially relevant" songs as well as for their soulful sound is Asin, which is making a comeback in the recording field courtesy of Vicor.

The group originally wanted to be called Salt of the Earth, a phrase found in the Bible and which means hardworking people.

The triumvirate of Pendong Aban, Saro Bañares and Lolita Carbon became widely known for such songs as "Itanong Mo sa mga Bata," "Pagbabalik," "Himig ng Pag-ibig," "Ang Bayan Kong Sinilangan" and the prophetic "Masdan Mo ang Kapaligiran."

The rape of Nature that Asin

ASIN/ A25

SEASONED pair, all that's left of Asin, is composed of Lolit Carbon and Pendong Aban.

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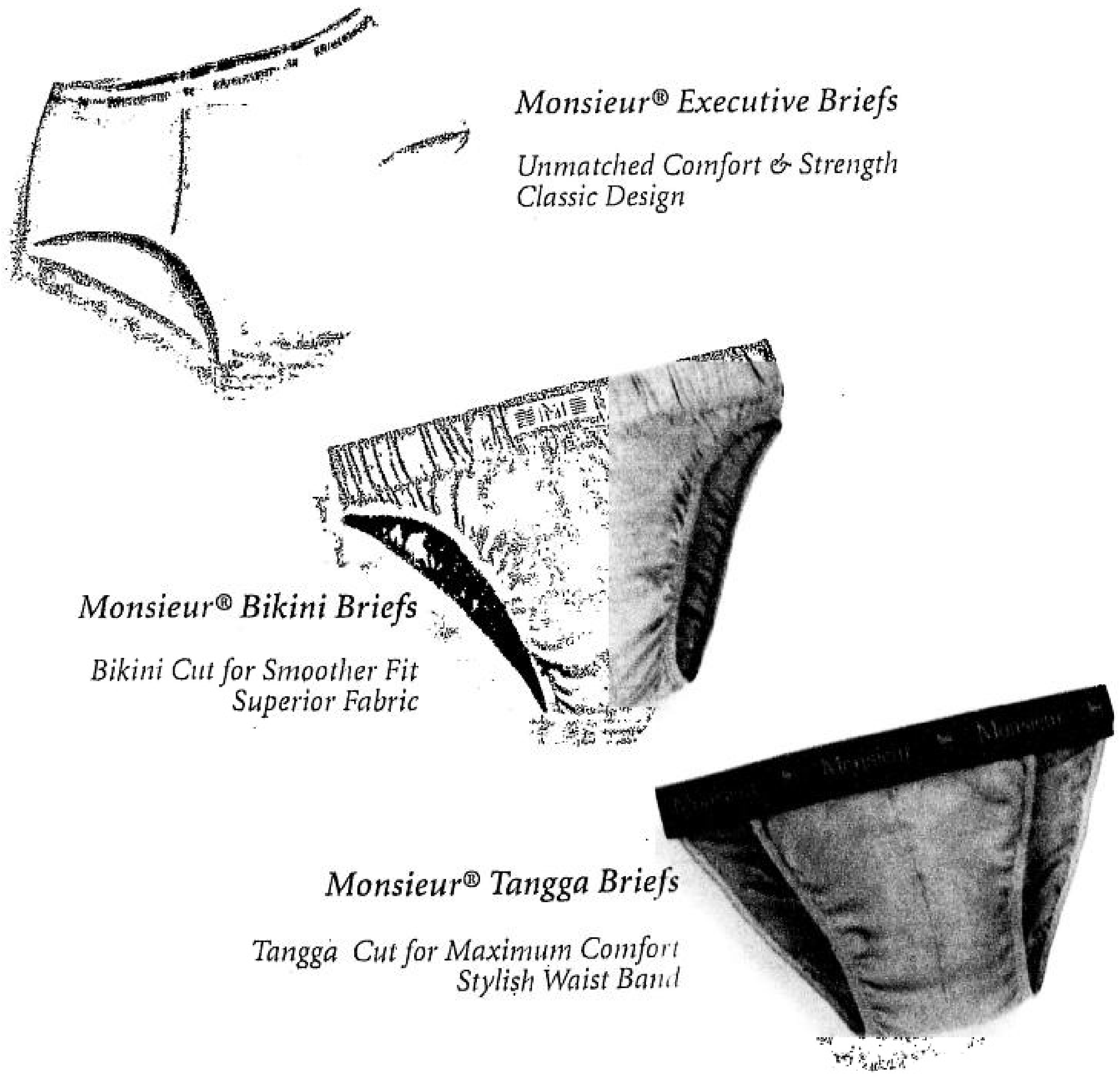

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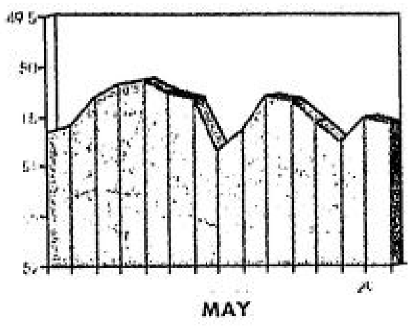

GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

Peso-Dollar Rate

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The US dollar was trading at 122.20 as of 5 p.m., May 30, 2001

GOLD:$273.80/274.30
per ounce Hong Kong, May 30, 2001

Shares slightly higher

SHARES yesterday closed mixed with the main market index boosted by bargain hunting in select blue chips following recent losses, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 11.07 points, or 0.8 percent, at 1396.50, after losing 0.7 percent Tuesday. The index has lost 4.6 percent in the last six sessions.

Helping to boost the index was blue chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., which gained P20 to P665, with 146,640 shares traded on bargain hunting. *AP*

Duty Free debts pile up due to mismanagement

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism yesterday admitted that the state-run Duty Free Philippines Inc. has piled up as much as P5 billion in debt over the last 12 years due to gross mismanagement of funds and operations.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon told reporters yesterday that his agency was looking for ways to untangle DFPI from its financial troubles in order to generate funds for tourism promotion.

Gordon said that based on preliminary review of DFPI's financial performance in the last 12 years, the company's earnings were unduly diverted to other projects leaving it with very little capital for re-investment.

Gordon said this forced DFPI to turn to banks to borrow for re-capitalization but even these loans were not used for the intended purpose.

Another major cause of DFPI's financial woes is the questionable purchases made by the previous company management of merchandise to be sold in the company's outlets.

"DFPI was buying products that were not running very well on the store shelves and I don't know why the previous management decided to buy them in the first place," Gordon said.

He cited the millions of pesos worth of wines and 24 gold Rolex watches in DFPI's storerooms that have stayed idle for years because there were no buyers. "These things should not have been sold at duty-free stores because people just don't buy them there," Gordon said.

DFPI: P5B in debts in the last 12 years

Gordon noted that a significant portion of DFPI's P3 billion to P5 billion debts were accumulated during the previous administration. Gordon said that DFPI remained a profitable venture but all of its earnings were being used to meet its loan payments.

Gordon said that due to the mismanagement of the company, the tourism hardly benefited from the boom years of duty-free stores in the 1990s.

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Benpres may sell $235M worth of assets to cover maturing bonds

By Doris C. Dumlao

BENPRES Holdings Corp., the holding company of the Lopezes, yesterday said it was willing to sell up to $235 million worth of assets—including a portion of its stake in flagship unit ABS CBN Broadcasting Corp.—as an option to wipe out its debts within the next two years.

During the company's stockholders meeting yesterday, Benpres CFO Angel Ong said the company would be willing to sell up to 8 percent of its stake in ABS CBN, 33 percent in a joint venture between its cable subsidiary Sky Vision Corp. and Home Cable, and 25 percent of its holdings in power generation unit First Generation Holdings Corp.

Ong said these assets were among those that Benpres could immediately liquidate to cover maturing debts within the next two years. However, he said Benpres would first try to seek refinancing before resorting to the sale of these assets.

He said the company, despite sour investments in the utility sector, was aptly covered as far as debt obligations were concerned.

Benpres has $150 million worth of Eurobonds maturing in December next year. Of the peso-denominated component of its obligations, P1 billion in loan is falling due in September this year and another P2 billion in October 2003.

Ong explained that Benpres would be able to raise around $60 million from the sale of half of its 66.5-percent stake in the joint venture cable company and another $125 million from the sale of the 25-percent stake in First Gen.

The sale of 8 percent of its stake in ABS CBN, he said, would generate for the company between $40 million and $50 million based on current trading levels at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"We might sell the 8-percent stake to institutional investors without diluting our majority control of ABS CBN," Ong said.

The holding company currently controls a 59 percent of ABSCBN.

Benpres chair and CEO Oscar Lopez said that the sharp depreciation of the peso as against the dollar had hit some of the group's investments, including telecommunications unit Bayan Telecommunications. To date, he said, Benpres was still trying to find a suitable and permanent solution to Bayantel's $500 million worth of debts incurred for the group's network and service rollout.

Maynilad Water Services Inc. was also badly hit by the peso fall as it absorbed $800 million of Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's foreign obligations.

At present, he said Benpres was reviewing its portfolio and strategic directions, following the difficulties encountered by its telecom and water distribution units. The Lopez group, he added, has reorganized itself to strengthen its businesses against further economic shocks.

He said the Lopez group would focus on communications, utilities, power generation and e-commerce.

Banking sector still sound–BSP

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura said that the Philippine banking system has proven to be resilient to the stresses experienced in the recent past.

Buenaventura, reacting to Standard & Poor's statement that the Philippine banking sector is still vulnerable to economic and political shocks, said the banking system is sound. "It should not be judged by the challenges that it is currently encountering. "Rather, it should be judged by the vigor and the quality of reforms that it is introducing."

Buenaventura cited the generally healthy liquidity position and strong capital buffer as key strengths that have helped the banking system meet the challenges posed by the Asian financial crisis. The capital adequacy ratio of 16.8 percent as of February this year, he said, was more than double the BIS standard of 8 percent, and was well above the statutory level of 10 percent.

This, he noted, reflected in large part the BSP's policy of requiring banks to infuse additional capital where necessary, in order to increase their capability to deal with stocks and to reduce moral hazard as they have more of their wealth at stake.

"Total resources have continued to rise—underpinned by increased deposit mobilization and capital build-up—in spite of the challenging macroeconomic environment," Buenaventura said in a statement.

He said that the banking sector's asset quality, while showing signs of weakening, has been maintained, with the NPL ratio of commercial banks being kept at a tight range of 12.1-16.7 percent during a period spanning more than two years, i.e. from January 1999 to March 2001. This ratio was substantially lower than those seen in other Asian countries. "This has occurred without the benefit of any public sector-led clean-up of debt and other non-performing assets similar to those that have been implemented in neighboring countries."

The level of NPLs is expected to improve as efforts aimed at corporate restructuring take hold and as economic growth gains momentum. At the same time, the BSP is encouraging the speedy off-loading of ROPOAs through private sector-led initiatives to enable banks to concentrate on new loans, thus allowing them to focus on areas within their core competence. This should also provide a much-needed boost for investments.

Of late, there have been a downtrend in interest rates and broad stability in the exchange rate. These factors are expected to provide an environment supportive of increased economic activity and consequently higher demand for bank loans. In fact, aggregate loan growth has been expanding on an annual basis for the past 14 months now.

With the market-friendly stance of the government and its firm commitment to structural reforms, as well as the resolution of political issues, the banking system is expected to show greater vigor in financial intermediation. The BSP's seriousness is underscored by its moves to enhance corporate governance in banks, including issues regarding transparency and the accountability of banks' management and board of directors. This is being strongly supported by the shift to a risk-based capital framework effective 1 July 2001 that features capital adequacy norms that are tougher than the minimum currently prescribed by the Basle Committee in terms of overall ratio and the Tier 2 capital component.

AYALA PLANS

Ayala Plans. Inc.
Education & Pension Programs

STATEMENT OF CONDITION

As of December 31, 2000

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	₱ 21,787,578
Short-term Cash Investments	
Investments	
Trust Funds	357,172,402
Shares of Stocks-at cost	127,711,168
Installment Contracts Receivable	2,797,309,552
Other Receivables	15,658,890
Property and Equipment-net	211,667,667
Deferred Commisions-net	254,888,578
Other Assets	19,562,319
TOTAL ASSETS	₱ 3,805,758,154
LIABILITIES	
Accrued Expenses and Other Liabilities	₱ 48,021,548
Installment Contacts Payable	111,858,291
Actuarial Reserves Liabilities	369,976,408
Estimated Benefit Provision in Installment Contracts Receivable	1,877,101,145
Unrealized Gross Income in Installment Contracts Receivables	920,208,407
Due to Affiliate Companies	298,570,454
TOTAL LIABILITIES	₱ 3,625,736,253
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital Stock	₱ 100,000,000
Revaluation Increment on Property	-
Reserve for Fluctuation of Investment in Shares of Stocks	16,889,140.00
Retained Earnings	63,132,761
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	₱ 180,021,901
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	₱ 3,805,758,154

TRUST FUND STATEMENT
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2000

Assets	EDUCATION	PENSION
Investment in other securities and debt instruments	₱ 143,282,285	₱ 193,902,284
Investment in common trust funds	6,061,699.00	₱ 14,056,450
Cash	6,186.00	7,632
	₱ 149,350,170	₱ 207,966,366
Less Liabilities		
Accrued trust fees payable	61,617	82,517
	₱ 149,288,553	₱ 207,883,849
Net Equity		
Fund balance, beginning	₱ 84,058,278	₱ 96,766,907
Additional deposits	54,599,810	96,965,087
Reserve for fluctuation of investments	645,433	2,469,318
	₱ 139,303,521	₱ 196,221,312
Net Income	9,985,032	11,662,537
Fund balance, end	₱ 149,288,553	₱ 207,883,849

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF MAKATI)S.S.

We, Romulo F. Alajor and Ramon G. Trajano of the above-mentioned Pre-need Company, do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief

RAMON G. TRAJANO
Finance Director

ROMULO F. ALAJOR
Business Director

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 10th day of May 2001 at Makati City,affiants exhibiting to me their residence Certificate No. 04176698 issued at Makati City on February 24, 2001 and Residence Certificate No. 04180268 issued at Makati City on February 28, 2001

Doc. No. 42
Page. No. 10
Book No. 58
Series of 2001

ERNESTO S. FERNANDEZ
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2001
PTR No. 1874842 issued at
Makati City on 1/6/01

Merrill Lynch buys RFM's PSi shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. has sold its 34-percent stake in semiconductors subsidiary PSi Technologies Holdings Inc. to a unit of Merrill Lynch.

The sale raised Merrill Lynch's equity in Psi Tech, the first Filipino firm to be listed at the technology-heavy Nasdaq board, to 53.74 percent

The estimated $32 million in proceeds from the last-minute sale of the 4.725 million PSi shares to Merrill Lynch Global Emerging Markets Partners Lp. came just in time for RFM to pay off a substantial portion of its $65-million bond obligation due yesterday.

RFM president and chief executive Jose Concepcion III said the sale was necessary for RFM to focus on the core businesses in the food and beverage sector.

"We want to devote more attention to the fast growing markets and high margin industries like soft drinks, milk and juices and ice cream where RFM has a competitive edge," Concepcion said.

JP Morgan Chase brokered the sale of the PSi shares. It was also asked to help RFM negotiate for more time to pay its obligations with the bondholders.

PSi is a focused independent semiconductor assembly and test service provider to the power semiconductor market.

RFM invested in PSi as a minority shareholder in the late 1980s when the semiconductor firm was still known as Pacific Semiconductors Inc.

RFM took over majority control in 1995 and nurtured the company to become one of the world's leaders in power semiconductor assembly and test services.

Among PSi's major customers are eight of the world's largest semiconductor device manufacturers.

2 firms to hold IPOs this year

TWO companies—real estate company Primex Corp. and software service firm SQL Wizard Inc.—will brave the battered stock market by holding their respective initial public offerings within the year.

The Philippine Stock Exchange said the two companies were among the four that had applied for IPO this year. The two others apparently shelved their IPO plans.

"After a long drought, there will finally be new listings," PSE president Ramon T. Garcia said.

Garcia said SQL Wizard would list on the exchange's new SME board, which opens up equities trading opportunities to firms with capitalization of P20 million to P100 million. It will be the first company to list on this board.

SQL Wizard develops and markets software, and is an Oracle-certified solutions partner. It is chaired by banker Enrique Pelaez of Mindanao Development Bank. Other members of its board are Alberto Hermoso Jr., Heraldina Salonga, Herminigildo Hermoso, Antonio Lasala, Michael Tanjangco and Perpetuo Lotilla Jr.

Based on PSE's records, SQL has proposed to list 20 million shares at an offer price of P1.75 by the third quarter of the year. It aims to build up a market capitalization of P35 million. The underwriter will be Pacific Asia Capital Corp.

Primex will list 300 million secondary shares on the first board of the PSE at an offer price of P1.80 to P2.20. The underwriter will be First Metro Investment Corp.

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has declared cash dividends of P0.50 per share on its series H, L, M and Y 10-percent cumulative convertible preferred stocks in favor of stockholders of record as of June 28. The dividends are payable on July 31. Also declared was cash dividend of $1.029412 per share, payable on July 13, on its series III convertible preferred stock in favor of stockholders as of June 15.

***

ELECTED directors of **Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.** were Nicasio Alcantara, Editha Alcantara, Delfin Lazaro, Carlos Dominguez, Bienvenido Tan III, Honorio Poblador III, Jose Ben Laraya, Tomas Alcantara, Alfredo de Borja, Tirso Santillan Jr. and Ramon Diokno.

***

ELECTED directors of **Manila Electric Co.** were Felipe Alfonso, Carlos Dominguez, Octavio Victor Espiritu, Peter Garrucho Jr., Monico Jacob, Federico Lopez, Manuel Lopez, Christian Monsod, Victoriano Reinoso, Washington Sycip and Margarito Teves.

***

ROBINSONS Land Corp. has declared a P0.005 per share cash dividend in favor of stockholders of record as of June 28 and shall be payable on July 27.

***

ELECTED directors of **Philippine National Bank** were Norberto Nazareno, Feliciano Miranda Jr., Domingo Chua, Francisco Dizon, Enrique Filamor, Vicente Panlilio, Cielo Salgado, Washington Sycip, Lucio Tan, Florencia Tarriela and Macario Te.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, May 30, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	74	76	74	76	467,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41	41	40.5	41	3,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	212	213	210	211	239,430
Philippine National Bank	47.5	48.5	47.5	48.5	50,800
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp. A	26	26	26	26	1,000
Security Bank Corp.	20	20.5	20	20.5	14,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	25	25	25	5,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	205,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	231	231	230	230	110
Manulife Financial Corp.	1290	1310	1290	1310	1,180
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1075	1080	1070	1080	15,150
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39.5	39.5	37	37	74,600
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.4	1,510,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	250,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	5,000
Piltel	0.5	0.61	0.5	0.61	2,680,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	650	665	650	665	146,640
Ivantage Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.041	82,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	41	42	41	41	140,000
Manila Electric Co. B	59.5	61	59.5	60	503,400
Petron Corp.	1.8	1.86	1.78	1.84	2,808,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	70,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	271,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.24	2.24	2.14	2.22	14,213,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.37	0.41	0.37	0.41	70,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.22	80,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	110,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	53,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.2	0.2	3,160,000
Union Cement Corp	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	897,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	65,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	176,900
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	27.5	28	27.5	28	181,000
Pure Foods Corp. A	100	100	100	100	20
Pure Foods Corp. B	105	105	105	105	1,000
RFM Corp.	1.06	1.06	1	1.06	524,000
Swift Food Inc.	1	1	1	1	30,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41.5	41.5	41	41.5	47,600
San Miguel Corp. B	46	46.5	46	46	301,500
Universal Robina Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	891,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	10,000
Ayala Corp.	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	96,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.5	1.58	1.5	1.58	4,016,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.75	12	11.75	12	1,800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	20,000
APC Group Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	190,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	12,000,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	40,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	130,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.38	1.42	1.36	1.4	2,099,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	450,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	3,820,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	470,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.5	24	23.5	23.75	205,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	900,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	250,000
Ionics Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.25	11.25	7,500
Ipeople Inc. B	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	15,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.72	0.73	220,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	1,500,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	17,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	760,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.6	21,000
Metro Alliance Holdings-B	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	190,000
Music Corp.	2.3	2.3	1.8	1.84	937,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.9	0.9	0.86	0.89	120,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	20,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	1,240,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	1,040,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38.5	38.5	36.5	37	176,300
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref	495	495	490	490	6,210
Jollibee Warrants	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	50,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	190,000,000
RFM Corp.-Pref	2.42	2.7	2.42	2.7	140,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10	10	10	10	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc -Warrants	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.032	23,500,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.8	4.95	4.8	4.9	4,540,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	3,200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	4,160,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2	2.06	2	2.06	1,667,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	210,000
SM Development Corp.	0.77	0.79	0.77	0.79	60,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	3,226,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	600,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	7,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	5,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	1,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0044	0.004	0.004	25,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	500,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	300,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	900,000
Interport Res.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	22,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	380,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,004,070	107,533,280.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	360,709,270	242,017,495.00
PRO	17,683,000	48,645,750.00
Mining	40,110,000	589,000.00
OIL	35,910,000	248,300.00
GRAND TOTALS:	455,416,340	399,033,825.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	601.99	UP 3.93
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,937.67	UP 10.11
PRO	519.30	UP 12.09
Mining	1,117.49	DOWN 25.47
OIL	1.40	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	754.37	UP 0.75
Composite	1,398.50	UP 11.07

NO. OF ADVANCES: 31; NO. OF DECLINES: 41; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 44; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 116; NO. OF TRADES: 2,368

CURRENCIES

May 30, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.170138	1.000000	50.7030
Japan	Yen	0.009754	0.008336	0.4227
United Kingdom	Pound	1.664989	1.422900	72.1453
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.150029	0.128215	6.5009
Switzerland	Franc	0.656348	0.560915	28.4401
Canada	Dollar	0.761016	0.650364	32.9754
Singapore	Dollar	0.647021	0.552944	28.0359
Australia	Dollar	0.602853	0.515198	26.1221
Bahrain	Dinar	3.103980	2.652661	134.4979
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.312003	0.266638	13.5193
Brunei	Dollar	0.646878	0.552822	28.0297
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000090	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.025773	0.022026	1.1168
UAE	Dirham	0.318604	0.272279	13.8054
Korea	Won	0.000908	0.000776	0.0393
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.854600	43.3308
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.43695	22.1547
France	Franc	0.152450	0.130283	6.6057
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.387801	19.6627
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.062106	3.1490
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.021185	1.0741
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000441	0.0224
Finland	Markka	0.168187	0.143733	7.2877
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004263	0.2161
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005136	0.2604
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.021185	1.0741
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.085118	55.0187

AFTER 7 YEARS

Power reform bill and promises undelivered

By Christine A. Gaylican

(Last of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

LORNA Medico, 33, has been with the security force of the National Power Corp. for nine years. Since 1995, when the first power reform bill was filed in Congress, she has already been distributing materials to Napo-cor visitors about the importance of restructuring the energy industry, but she admits she doesn't understand what it really is all about.

"*Mahirap intindihin ang* power bill *na iyan. Basta sabi nila mas mababa na daw ang* bill *namin mula sa* Meralco," says Lorna. Her electric bills run up to about P260 to P300 a month.

The Omnibus Power Bill promises to cut electric bills, but by how much and when are the things that consumers like Lorna are concerned about.

The power reform bill seeks to change the structure of electricity tariffs in the country, which are currently based on guaranteed returns.

"There is always that guaranteed return on investments. Even the bad business decisions could be recovered. It's really looking at the cost of producing and distributing energy and spreading that on the power rates charge to consumers. If you are a high-cost producer, you need to charge high power rates. Napocor has a structure that makes it a high-cost producer because of its high payments to settle its obligations," Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said. He said unless the cost of generating electricity before distribution could be lowered, power rates would remain high.

Changes

The government believes that the private sector will be able to give Napocor a better capital structure and manage its power plants more efficiently, leading to lower power rates.

"We would also be changing the way rates are determined because the new structure would be broken down into generation, transmission, distribution and supply," Camacho said.

He said the power reform bill would introduce new components to Meralco's rate structure of a basic charge, a currency adjustment, a purchase power adjustment and an energy tax.

Meralco's basic charge would further be broken down into a generation charge, a transmission wheeling charge, a universal charge, a distribution wheeling charge, other cross subsidies, a retail supply charge, a currency adjustment, a purchase power adjustment, and an energy tax.

Efficiency

Camacho said with the power reform bill, consumers would enjoy a 30-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour cut in their electric bills "as the system becomes more efficient."

"There would be the elimination of cross subsidies across industrial and commercial and residential customers. Despite the removal of subsidies for residential customers, they would still experience lower power rates," he said.

He said the current purchase power adjustment—charged at P1 per kwh to cover for dollar-denominated take-or-pay arrangements with independent power producers—would now be amortized over 10 to 15 years.

"The PPA is what is being argued about these days among the electric cooperatives and other distribution utilities. It is payment for the power purchased from independent power producers. The new setup provided by the (power reform) bill targets to bring this PPA charge to as low as 30 centavos per kwh," Camacho said.

He said this would be taken up in the privatization component of the power reform bill.

Debts

The government expects to sell Napocor for about $4.5 billion, not enough to cover its debts, which have reached over $6.7 billion, leaving the power firm with over $2 billion in stranded costs. These costs would be taken cared of by a new entity, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), which would manage Napocor's assets and liabilities.

PSALM will have the power to renegotiate Napocor's contracts with independent power producers to obtain better terms and reduce the power firm's stranded costs.

Napocor's privatization is expected to lead to P352 billion in net stranded costs. The government has committed to absorb P200 billion of this obligation. "This will slash the stranded cost to P152 billion. Divided to levelized electricity, this would result in a net stranded cost of 30 centavos per kwh instead of the current 80 centavos," Camacho said.

"The government's absorption of P200 billion may be viewed as a late equity infusion by the government to Napocor," he said.

Buyers

In 1999, Napocor's Privatization and Restructuring External Office announced that 112 foreign investors, financial intermediaries and consultants wanted a piece of Napocor's privatization pie. This list included big power utilities like Electricite de France, California Energy International, Power Corporation of Australia, the United Kingdom's National Power Plc., Korean Electric Power Co., and Argentina Impsa Asia Ltd.

Former PREO manager Fernando Roxas said local groups also expressed interest in Napocor's privatization, among them JG Summit Holdings Corp. of the Gokongwei family, former Energy Minister Geronimo Velasco's Republic Asahi Glass Corp., and Asian Terminal Inc.'s Eusebio Tanco, who also owns Power and Renewable Resources Corp., which already owns a stake in the Tiwi-Makban geothermal facility.

Roxas said the Gokongwei group was keen on bidding for Napocor's power plants. Also competing for these facilities were the Lopez and Alcantara groups. The Lopezes own Meralco and First Gas Corp. while the Alcantaras control Davao Light and Power Co.

Joint ventures

Asia Infrastructure Database managing director David Robertson said companies abroad would likely form joint ventures with local firms that already had stakes in transmission and distribution networks.

"Because it is defined in the bill what investors may and may not do, they would rather undertake about 40 to 60 percent of the projects," he said, citing the case of Singapore-based Salcon Power Corp.

Salcon is taking over the electricity distribution business in Tagbilaran, Bohol. It is holding talks to buy half of the Leyte Electric Cooperative, which is experiencing financial problems.

"This arrangement would allow foreign groups to have a ready market for their power in case they invest in power generating plants.''Robertson said the plan to spin off Napocor's power generating assets should be reviewed.

The current mix, he said, "is currently not a viable mix of thermal and hydro units. This should be reviewed and arranged into smaller groups for them to be attractive."

Napocor officials said the genco groupings were arranged to prevent one company from taking control of all of Napocor's thermal and hydroelectric power plants.

"It was arranged this way so that there would be no competition to avoid dominance of critical parts of the load curve by a single generating company, especially during sudden blackouts. The geothermal assets were separated," Napocor senior vice president Asiscio Gonzaga said.

Because of the long wait, UK firms National Power and Powergen Plc are already looking elsewhere in Asia.

Acceptable

The Consumer Impact Assessment Report of the Asian Development Bank released in February showed that the power reform bill would lead to economic growth.

"These reforms, such as the removal of cross-subsidies and opening of the market to competition, usher in gains not only to residential consumers, but also gains to the production sector," it said.

The ADB study said these productivity gains would come from a competitive market that puts in place efficient pricing of electricity. It said there would be a trade balance improvement due to the efficiency gains of the production sector, which translates to more competitive pricing of their produce in the domestic and international markets.

The influential Makati Business Club has sent a letter to the President expressing their support for the Omnibus Power Bill.

"A further delay in passing the critical legislation could lead to power shortages and brownouts in just three to four years," it said.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the power bill, after countless revisions, should now be acceptable to almost all sectors.

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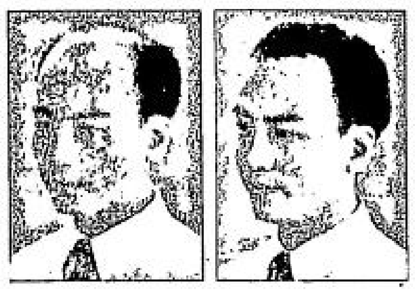

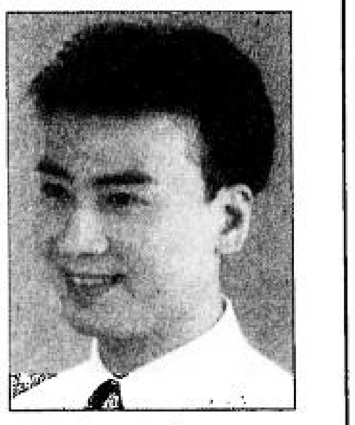

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INQUIRER Classified Ads Cubao branch SOON to open in Aurora Boulevard

Meralco says it's not overbilling customers

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE MANILA Electric Co. yesterday denied it was passing on costs higher than the National Power Corp.'s rates.

"We have not passed on to our consumers any cost of our independent power producers above the Napocor grid rate," Meralco treasurer Rafael Andrada said in reaction to Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's allegation that the utility firm had been overcharging its customers.

Andrada said Meralco's "purchase power adjustment" costed only P2.08 per kilowatt-hour, including the 2-percent franchise tax and a 9.5-percent system loss.

He said the franchise tax and the system loss amounted to 26 centavos per kwh, leaving P1.82 per kwh in actual PPA.

The PPA is an automatic price adjustment mechanism charged for power bought from generating firms.

Add this to the P1.78-per-kwh basic rate of power bought from Napocor and Meralco's own independent power producers, the firm's cost of generation would amount to P3.60.

"This is well within Napocor's (effective selling rate) of P3.59 per kwh," Andrada said.

Enrile also accused Meralco of entering into a "sweetheart deal" with sister firm First Gas Power Corp.

The senator charged that Meralco overcharged consumers P914 million in March in price adjustments for power "purportedly" bought from the Lopez-owned First Gas Power Corp.

ABN Amro agrees to buy, merge TA Bank with thrift

By Elena R. Torrijos

DUTCH banking giant ABN Amro Bank NV announced yesterday that it had agreed to acquire TA Bank of the Philippines Inc.

In a news statement, ABN Amro disclosed that it planned to merge TA Bank with its local thrift unit, ABN Amro Savings Bank, to create a wholly owned commercial bank.

ABN Amro said it agreed to acquire TA Bank, a commercial bank with four branches, from The Manila Banking Corp. for an undisclosed price.

It said it expected the deal to be concluded in 60 days, subject to the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Dutch Central Bank.

"This deal demonstrates ABN Amro's intent to be a major player in the Philippines' wholesale banking market. We are the only foreign bank to make two bank acquisitions in the country in the last 18 months," ABN Amro country representative Carmelo Bautista said.

"It reflects our positive long-term view on the Philippines, as well as our commitment to make the investments needed to build a robust commercial bank franchise," he said.

ABN Amro, which has an offshore banking unit and a securities brokerage here apart from its thrift bank, was not one of the foreign banks awarded a full branch license in 1992 by the Bangko Sentral.

In late 1999, it acquired Great Pacific Savings Bank to upgrade its status to a full commercial bank, but was prevented from doing so by a change in local banking regulations early last year.

ABN Amro said the acquisition of TA Bank, which has a total asset base of P1.5 billion and a full commercial bank license, provides an ideal solution to expanding its wholesale banking franchise in the Philippines.

TA Bank was acquired by Manila Bank from the TA Group of Malaysia in July 2000.

Its disposal follows a subsequent shift in Manila Bank's strategy to focus on the middle market and small and medium enterprises.

ABN Amro is one of the largest financial institutions in the world and serves its wholesale, consumer and commercial and private asset management clients through an extensive global network.

Headquartered in Amsterdam, ABN Amro has total assets of over $500 billion and has over 100,000 employees.

ABN Amro was founded in 1824 and has been active in Asia since 1826.

DOE says no need to wait for IPP review

ENERGY Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday insisted there was no need to wait for the results of the review of the National Power Corp.'s contracts with independent power producers.

"The executive department believes that there is a need to review the contracts immediately," Camacho said in a news briefing.

The secretary said the review of the contracts entered into during the height of the power crisis in the mid-1990s was meant to improve the terms for government in its efforts to restructure the industry.

He said the review of the contracts should be treated with the same urgency as with the many steps to improve the power industry, all of which aim to bring down power rates.

Oppositors to the power bill have been calling for the completion of the review before any talks of passing a law on power restructuring should be made.

The oppositors point out that the "onerous" contracts were a cause of high power rates.

Officials said the stranded costs of the contracts are already being paid at about a peso per kilowatt-hour.

Under the power bill, the stranded costs may go down to 25 to 30 centavos per kwh if it were to be amortized in a period of between 15 and 25 years.

On the other hand, Camacho said any impact to the power bill that comes from the results of the review may be taken as amendments if these were appropriate.

Banks ask BSP to legitimize buy-back deals

THE BANKERS Association of the Philippines is asking the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for a new set of guidelines to legitimize buy-back arrangements among banks and investment houses involving government securities.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that the BAP had asked the Bangko Sentral and the Bureau of Treasury to sign a memorandum of agreement that would provide a system for "cash-settled securities swap transactions" among banks and investment houses, and between these financial institutions and the central bank.

Also known as "buy-back arrangements," cash-settled securities swap transactions are technically agreements among banks and investment houses to simultaneously buy and sell government securities at predetermined dates and prices.

The BAP informed the Bangko Sentral that there were "many government swap transactions, both spot and forward, among BAP member banks and financial institutions which are not uniformly structured and settled and, therefore, could be subject to various risks for the transacting parties." *Elena R. Torrijos*

Stratos brings Iridium service back to Asia

By Abigail L. Ho

STRATOS Global Corp., a satellite communications service provider specializing in high-value, remote area applications, has expanded to the Asia-Pacific region, bringing with it the re-launched Iridium mobile satellite service.

"This service provides cheap voice calls to and from anywhere in the world using a handset weighing less than 500 grams," Stratos Asia-Pacific vice president Michael Smith said.

Stratos Iridium is one of the cheapest mobile telephone services in the world, with a flat rate of $1.50 a minute for calls to and from any location in the world. It has cheaper rates compared with the GSM (global system for mobile communications) international roaming service.

Information from Globe Telecom Inc.'s customer service center places the cost of a mobile call from Hong Kong to a Philippine landline at around $1.60 to $1.80 a minute. Calls to and from other locations are even more expensive.

Smart Communications Inc. recently launched its Smart ACeS (Asia Cellular Satellite) service, but it covers only a 13-million-square-mile area from Japan, South Korea and China in the north to Indonesia in the south and Papua New Guinea in the east to Pakistan in the west.

Smith said Stratos' edge over Smart's ACeS service was that "Stratos is global, while ACeS is only Asia-wide."

He also said Stratos "will aggressively compete with existing operators in the Asia-Pacific market."

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Republic of the Philippines
SOUTHERN LEYTE STATE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY
Sogod, Southern Leyte

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

A. The Southern Leyte State College of Science and Technology, Sogod, Southern Leyte is inviting qualified contractors (Small B) to pre-qualify and bid the proposed construction of SLSCST Two-Storey Administration Building, Phase II.

B. Pre-C Forms, Bid documents as well as other informations are available at the PBAC Secretariat c/o PBAC Chairman, SLSCST, Sogod, Southern Leyte upon submission of the following: 1. Letter of Intent 2. PCAB License 3. Certification of Completion and Acceptance of Contract Agreement of completed projects and 4. Presentation of original documents for authentication purposes.

C. Working Plan (blue print) shall be released to pre-qualified contractors upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 only from authorized representative with authorization from the owner/board.

D. Schedule of Activities:

1. Pre-qualification ....June 14, 2001
2. Issuance of Bid Documents . ...June 21, 2001
3. Pre-bidding Conference .... July 12, 2001
4. Submission of Pre-C and Bid Documents . July 26, 2001

E. SLSCST reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally any defect herein and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

For more information, please contact Valerio B. Cabalo, PBAC Chairman or Monina S. Solis PBAC Executive Officer/Secretary. Tel. Nos. 053-382-2003, 053-382-3294.

(Sgd.) LEONARDO L. MANALO
President

(PDI – May 31, June 2 & 4, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Unit No. V
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur
Tel. No. (054) 477-3356; Fax No. (054) 361-1264
E-mail: daralld5@digitelone.com

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Department of Agriculture, Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur is inviting interested duly accredited dealer/suppliers of *fifty (50) units power sprayer (new model), forty-five (45) units Brush/Grass Cutter (new model), two (2) units Standby Generator 5KVA* for use at the Department of Agriculture, Regional Field Unit No. 5 with office address at San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Bid documents with complete specifications of the needed item can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat at the above address starting May 28, 2001 until the close of the office hours of June 4, 2001, upon submission of the *Letter of Intent, Business License, Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years including the Financial Statement for 1999 and 2000; experience record/list of clients served (private or public) and other relevant documents* and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Ps.500.00

Pre-Bidding Conference will be held at the DA Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur on June 5, 2001 at 9:00 AM. Deadline for submission of bids to BAC will be on the same date and time after which bidding proper follows in the presence of the bidders or duly authorized representative.

Each bid must be accompanied by bidder's bond equivalent to 2.5% of the gross amount of bid price offered either in the form of *cash, manager's/cashier's check, surety bond issued by the GSIS only or a combination thereof.*

Price offered should include VAT.

The DA RFU 5 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waives any defect contained therein, and to accept the lowest, evaluated, complying and responsive bid and the most advantageous to the interest of the government.

For more details see or call the BAC Secretariat, Legal Office, DA RFU 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur, with Tel. No. (054) 477-3356, Fax No. (054) 361-1264.

22 May 2001.

(Sgd.) JOSE V. DAYAO, DVM
OIC, ARD for Administration, Finance & Regulatory & BAC Chairman

(PDI – May 31, 2001)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

PHILIPPINES 2000
Sama-Sama sa DECS

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) through the Health and Nutrition Center (HNC) is inviting all suppliers and printers to bid for the purchase of 90,000 capsules of Vitamin A for pupils afflicted with Vitamin A deficiency and for the printing of 2,500,000 pieces of individual health cards for all pre-school and Grade I pupils in public elementary schools nationwide.

All interested suppliers and printers must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining documents starting May 30 to June 6, 2001 at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm 112-A, Mabini Bldg., ULTRA Complex, Pasig City.

A pre-bid conference will be held on June 21, 2001, 9:00 AM for Individual Health Cards and 10:30 AM for Vitamin A at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. I, ULTRA Complex, Pasig City. The submission and opening of bids will be on June 28, 2001 at the same time and place mentioned above.

DECS-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) ERNESTO S. PANGAN
Undersecretary
Chairman, DECS-BAC

(PDI–May 30, 31 & June 1, 2001)

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National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID AD NO. PD 2001-28

Rebidding Date: June 11, 2001 - 10:00 A.M.

PB010522-T3JR6148	ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS (Integrated Circuit, Transistor, Diode, Rectifier, etc.)
PB010522-T3JR6150	ENGINE ASSEMBLY, surplus, 4D56, 4 cylinder
PB010522-T3JR6151	REGULATOR, Nitrous Oxide for Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer PN BS 303-0349
PB010522-T3JR6152	COMPUTER, Notebook/COMPUTER PRIPHRALS (Hard Disk, etc.) / SERVICES: Repair of Laptop Computer
PB010522-T3WC6153	PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPLIES (Blank Tape, Album, Film, Battery Pack)
PB010522-T3WG6178	PAPER, Refractory, Size 3.175 mm X 1.000 MM X 1000 MM
PB010522-T3JR6181	PREVENTIVE/CORRECTIVE MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES (Electrical Tape/Battery, Adhesive, Automotive Wire, etc.)
PB010522-T3WG6186	SERVICES: One Year Supply of Labor, Tools, & Equipment for the Preventive Maintenance of 1 Unit Inductotherm VIP-Power Tak R Series with Two Furnaces
PB010522-T3JR6182	SERVICES: Jor Order for Gear Cutting of Internal Gear - 14 Teeth

**Bidding Date: June 18, 2001 - 10:00 A.M.

2001-28-01	TELECOMMUNICATION MATERIALS/SUPPLIES (Telephone Set Cord
2001-28-02	Modular/Utility Box, Terminal Lug, Wire Marker, Bolts & Nuts, etc.)
2001-28-03	MIRROR, Frameless Plate Glass, Size 24" x 36"
2001-28-04	ARGON GAS, Ultra High Purity, 99.999% Min Ar. Cylinder Size: Standard
2001-28-05	OFFICE/COMPUTER SUPPLIES (Bond paper, Paper Clip, Correction Fluid, Toner Cartridge)
2001-28-06	AUTOMOTIVE SPARE PARTS for Mitsubishi Pajero, Model 1991
2001-28-07	LAMP Halogen/Incandescent
2001-28-08	HARDWARE SUPPLIES (Pipe, Elbow, Faucet, Hose, etc.)
2001-28-09	SERVICES: Supply of Labor & Materials for the Installation of Swing Door/Fixed Panel at Training Center Bldg. & At Bldg. 1, Ground Floor
2001-28-10	SERVICES: Supply of Labor & Materials for the Water Proofing of Gutters at Training Center per attached drawing and specifications

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. **Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on June 7, 2001

Bidding documents available on May 31, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents June 13, 2001

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 A.M. For inquiries please call no. 921-25-74

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI May 31 & June 1, 2001)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

PHILIPPINES 2000
Sama Sama sa DECS

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) through the Health and Nutrition Center (HNC) is inviting all manufacturers/suppliers of fortified instant noodles to bid for the procurement of 726,336 packs of iron fortified instant noodles for the implementation of Breakfast Feeding Program of the Department.

All interested manufacturers/suppliers must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting May 30 to June 6, 2001 at the BAC Secretariat Office, Rm. 112-A, Mabini Bldg., ULTRA Complex, Pasig City.

A pre-bid conference will be held on June 20, 2001, 10:00 AM at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. I, ULTRA Complex, Pasig City. The submission and opening of bids will be on June 27, 2001 at the same time and place mentioned above.

DECS-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) ERNESTO S. PANGAN
Undersecretary
Chairman, DECS-BAC

(PDI–May 30, 31 & June 1, 2001)

INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Far-out sounds

Q. Why can't you buy the 1977 record *The Sounds of Earth* anywhere in the planet?

A. Because it's way out in deep space aboard the unmanned U.S. spacecraft *Voyager 2*. The 87½-minute phonograph disc - touted to contain the 'Earth's greatest hits' - is part of Voyager's messages of greetings to any intelligent life form it might meet. Scientists argued that musical structure is actually based on numbers, and since mathematics is the most universal of languages, aliens were more likely to understand the mathematical structure of our music than anything else about us. And to make sure the record could express the full variety of human cultures, NASA chose such 'hits' as flute music from Japan, Navajo Indian chants, bagpipes from Azerbaijan, percussion from Senegal, Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Louis Armstrong's *Melancholy Blues*, and Chuck Berry's rock 'n' roll anthem *Johnny B. Goode*. Made of gold-plated copper, the 12-inch record disc is built to last a billion years.

For the Record. The Voyager 2 disc also contains 115 images and a variety of natural sounds selected to portray the diversity of life forms and cultures on earth. Spoken greetings in 55 languages, and printed messages from Jimmy Carter, former president of the United States, and from Kurt Waldheim, former United Nations secretary general, were also included.

Classified Odd. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll, was banned in Hunan, China, in 1931. The governor of the province reasoned that "animals should not use human language," adding that it was "disasterous [sic] to put animals and human beings on the same level."

WORD WATCH

Basa : from the Sanskrit *baca*, meaning "to read."

PDI – May 31, 2001

AUCTION SALE

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STEAM BOILER - BABCOCK & WILCOX THERMAX STS 21 Tonnes/hr at 150 PSI Bunker Oil Fired Water Tube Boiler
PUMPS - (500+) BRIGGS & STRATTON 2P5 5HP Petrol Driven 2" Cap.; (100+) BRIGGS & STRATTON PTG305 Petrol Driven 2" Cap.; SUCHO/OLEO MAC 2" Cap. Water Pump; BRIGGS & STRATTON / KUBOTA / COTEMME 3" Water Pump; Manual Pumps; A Qty. Of Pumps & Water Pump Engine Spare Parts
CANTEEN EQUIPMENT & FURNITURE - Stainless Steel Twin Sink, Sink, Sink w/ Drainer, Food Counter, Serving Counter, Tray Rack, (2) Preparation Tables, Steel Rack, Garbage Tank, Gas Range, Oven, Range Hood; FOODTECH Stainless Steel Drinking Fountain, Four Door Freezer; GE/HOTPOINT Chest Freezers; GE Two Door Refrigerator; GE Refrigerator; Asstd Canteen Tables / Dinnerware / Cutlery / Saucepans, etc.
LOOSE TOOLS & EQUIPMENT - Bolt Croppers; Hand Axes; Wood saws; Asstd. Scissors, Weighing Scales; (500+) Digging Spades
OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Four/Two Drawer Filing Cabinets; Three Drawer Steel Lateral Filing Cabinets; Two Drawer Safety Vaults; Steel Pedestals; Computer Tables; 14' Wooden Conference Table; Fabric Upholstered Executive/Clerical/Guest Chairs; Asstd. White Boards; Personal Computers; HP/EPSON Printers; SANYO Paper Shredders; FUJI/XEROX 5026 Photocopiers; XEROX 7024 Plain Paper Copier; KODAK Projector; Asstd. Telephone Handsets; Asstd. UPS's
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Bgy. Diklum, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, Philippines
ON: Friday, 8th June 2001 at 10:30am Sharp
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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Region Field Unit No. V
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur
Tel. No. (054) 477-3356; Fax No. (054) 361-1264
E-mail: daralld5@digitelone.com

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Department of Agriculture, Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur is inviting interested duly accredited dealer/suppliers of Office Equipment (computers, copier machine, etc.), for use at the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Unit No. 5 with office address at San Agustin Pili, Camarines Sur.

Bid documents with complete specifications of the needed item can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat at the above address starting May 28, 2001 until the close of the office hours of June 5, 2001, upon submission of the *letter of intent, Business License, Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years including the Financial Statement for 1999 and 2000; experience record/list of clients served (private or public) and other relevant documents* and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Ps. 500.00

Pre-Bidding conference will be held at the DA Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur on June 6, 2001 at 9:00 AM. Deadline for submission of bids to BAC will be on the same date and time after which bidding proper follows in the presence of the bidders or duly authorized representative.

Each bid must be accompanied by bidder's bond equivalent to 2.5% of the gross amount of bid price offered either in the form of *cash, manager's/cashier's check surety bond issued by the GSIS only or a combination thereof*

Price offered should include VAT.

The DA RFU 5 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waives any defect contained therein and to accept the lowest evaluated, complying and responsive bid and the most advantageous to the interest of the government.

For more details see or call the BAC Secretariat, Legal Office, DA RFU 5, San Agustin Pili Camarines Sur, with Tel No (054) 477-33-56, Fax No (054) 361-1264

22 May 2001

(Sgd.) JOSE V. DAYAO, DVM
OIC, ARD for Admin, Finance & Regulatory & BAC Chairman

(PDI May 31 2001)

National Power Corporation
Generation Company 1
161 Bonifacio Drive Port Area, Manila 1018

GENCO-1

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The NPC GENCO-1 Regional Contracts Committee (RCC) is inviting contractors to Prequalify and to Bid for the following:

PROJECT CODE AND TITLE	SCOPE OF WORKS, TRACK RECORDS & LICENSE/ CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT
1 SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPERVISION OF JOBS RELATED TO JANITORIAL AND SANITATION & OTHER RELATED UTILITY SERVICES FOR BATAAN THERMAL POWER PLANT (2PQ0800RCC-006)	The services to be performed by the Applicant shall cover all requirements for the proper upkeep, cleanliness, and sanitation of buildings & grounds. Applicant shall have at least 1-year exp. similar to the requirement and with valid DTI/ SEC Certificate.
2 SUPPLY OF LABOR, MATERIALS/ SUPPLIES, TOOLS/EQUIPMENT & SUPERVISION FOR JOBS RELATED TO JANITORIAL, SANITATION & OTHER RELATED UTILITY SERVICES FOR BATANGAS COAL-FIRED THERMAL POWER PLANT (PQ1000RCC-017)	The services to be performed by the Applicant shall cover all requirements for the proper upkeep, cleanliness, and sanitation of buildings & grounds. Applicant shall have at least 1-year exp. similar to the requirement and with valid DTI/ SEC Certificate.

Application for pre-qualification is open to all Filipino Contracting Firms with valid license and/or business permit mentioned above. Prospective bidders must be able to prove his Experience, Equipment capability as well as his Financial capacity to perform the services called for.

Pre-qualification Forms shall be available for issuance starting May 24, to June 6, 2001 at the NPC GENCO-1 Contracts Management Office (CMO), 3rd Floor NPC GENCO-1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila, upon presentation of original copy of the applicant's valid business license and/or certificate mentioned above, together with the Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of (per copy):

Item no. 1 - Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)
Item no. 2 - One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00)

For purposes of pre-qualification and bidding activities, the following schedules will be observed:

	JANITORIAL	
ACTIVITIES	BTPP	BCFTPP
Submission of Prequa. Docs.	June 20, 2001	June 20, 2001
Issuance of Bid Documents	July 23, 2001	July 27, 2001
Pre-bid Conference	July 30, 2001	Aug. 3, 2001
Submission/Opening of Bids	Aug. 10, 2001	Aug. 15, 2001

The NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason; waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the Corporation. The NPC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) LORNA T. DY
Officer-In-Charge, RAFS
And Chairman, RCC

(PDI–May 24, 28 & 31, 2001)

ERRATUM

In the ad of **NAPOCOR** published in this paper dated **May 24 and 28, 2001**, the amount of **Item No. 2** was inadvertently printed as **5,000.00** instead of **1,000.00**.
Our apologies.

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BENITO CHUA TOMAS SR.

- *A Gentleman*

The Patriarch of the Tomas family passed away on Sunday, May 27, 2001 at the age of 70, at his home, to be with our Lord.

Born April 13, 1931, in Manila, to the late Pablo and Chua Ti Tomas.

His loving wife **Josefa**; sons **Benito Jr.**, **George**, **John** and **Richard**; daughters **Teresita**, **Elizabeth**, and **Beverly**; children-in-law **Helen**, **William**, **Aka** and **Shirley**; grandchildren **Joy**, **Hazel**, **Will**, **Marissa**, **Jeremiah**, **O'Neil**, **Kathleen**, and **Jusslyn**; invite families and friends to the viewing and memorial services.

His body lies in state at the Faith Room of Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Main memorial service and eulogies will be held at Arlington on Friday evening, June 1st, at 8:00 p.m.

Interment will be at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 2, 2001 following a short memorial service at Ever Memorial Garden in Meycauayan, Bulacan.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course;
I have kept the faith.

2 Timothy 4:7

PLACIDA MATIONG DURAN "PLACING"

November 16, 1922 - May 26, 2001

Her bereaved husband ENGR. BOANERJES R. DURAN (former Chairman of the Board of Examiners for Marine Engineers); and loving children RUSSELL, GIRLIE, MAE, LORNA, WILMA (†), EMMANUEL, MARIA SOCORRO and BOANERJES JR.; brothers and sisters, sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence at 124 Guadalupe Street, Morning Breeze Subdivision, Caloocan City.

Memorial services will be held at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Morning Breeze, on Saturday, June 2, 2001 at 9:00 AM. Interment will follow immediately at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Caloocan City.

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GREGORIO B. RIGUERRA

Peacefully rests in the infinite love of the Lord, on May 30, 2001 at the age of 64.

His loving wife, children, daughter in-law, sister, brothers, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue and will be transferred to Aniban, Bacoor, Cavite

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Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God make us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again.

2Cor. 5:4-5

Our Dearly Beloved

Judge Eduardo Roden E. Kapunan

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 28, 2001 at the age of *54*

His bereaved wife **Lorna Patajo-Kapunan**; loving children **Lino Chris and Vera, Marko Edoardo, Ceasario Rex, Eduardo Roden Jr. & Reginald Patrick**; grandchild **Kyle Linus**, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels at Guadalupe, Makati.

Interment will be on Saturday, 02 June 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Nuestra Sra. de Garcia.

" For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life". John 3:16

In Loving Memory

On the First Death Anniversary of

CENON S.A. MAURICIO

Who joined his Creator on May 31, 2000

His family requests relatives, friends, and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul and to remember him always in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory at the following:

Family Home Concord, California	**May 27, 2001**	
St. Agnes Church Concord, California	**May 31, 2001**	**7:00 AM**
Pakil, Laguna	**May 31, 2001**	**7:00 AM**
Mary Help of Christian Church Better Living, Parañaque	**May 31, 2001**	**7:00 AM**
Sta. Clara Church Pasay City	**May 31, 2001**	**7:00 AM**

VICTOR "SAXO" CRUZ NAVASERO, JR.

August 2, 1933 – August 29, 2001
UPSILON BATCH '55

His loving wife **Guia Bucks**; children and grandchildren; **Victor III** and **Nani Icasiano** - Brian; **Ghizelle** and **Tim Miguel** - Joshua, Dominic and Isabela; **Michelle** and **Edu Mendoza** - Emico; **Hazel** and **Mitch de Padua** - Antonio, Mikael and Bianca; and **Romano** and **Mona Javier** - Nicole and Simon; Brothers and in-laws **Hector** and **Sylvia Arnaldo**, **Nestor** and **Evelyn Palmiano**, **Ador** and **Carmen Culanag**; sister **Luz Amandolina** ***"Mandy"***, **Gary** and **Delia Sales** and **Ding**; nephews, nieces, grand nephews and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish inside the UPLB campus, College, Laguna, with daily Mass at 8:00 p.m.

The UPSILON Rites by the UPLB Upsilon residents will be offered to Brod Saxo on Saturday, June 2, 2001, 7:00 p.m.

A Holy Mass will be celebrated at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, June 3, 2001. Interment will follow at the Los Baños Memorial Garden.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu
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BMW shows off M54-powered Roadster, coupé, sedan

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

"MANILA-BAGUIO-MANILA." It looked like a flight itinerary but it was actually a test-drive tour invite from BMW Group Philippines. Its new M54 engines inside five BMW variants are about to land in the Philippine market. And we had our "inaugural flights" in these vehicles.

What's so great about being a motoring reporter is that, once in a while, I get to become a movie character like James Bond. This time, BMW would be taking me to the reel world.

But never did I expect to get a first crack at BMW's newest conversation pieces in the country—the Z3 2.2i roadster, a Z3 3.0iA coupé, a 325iA Touring, a two-door coupé 325CiA and a four-door limousine 325iA. My last flashy car drive was a handsome Alfa Romeo 147 in the narrow and flooded highways of Monaco, Nice and Italy. And I kept on wondering that time when I would get to "deglamorize" such European luxuries by driving it on Edsa.

And so last week, I got my "wish" when I drove and rode not an Italian pride, but five German marques, all rear-wheel drive.

Our first leg of the trip to Baguio was via Edsa; driving partner TV motoring journalist Ron de Los Reyes was himself excited to become a James Bond.

Still "oven fresh" from the Bureau of Customs, with only 28 km showing on its odometer, the convertible is a two-door roadster, a BMW Z3 2.2i. With a 5-speed manual transmission, it has an output of 170 hp and a top speed of 222 km/h. It is, incidentally, the only unit without an aircon. Off we went at 10 a.m., the scorching heat of the sun threatening to give us an unscheduled tan. The blower that substituted for the aircon was in full throttle and our "James Bond" was perspiring like a melting block of ice. We could only utilize its 5-speed manual as we reached the North Expressway. It has an M54 2171 cc, Inline 6 cylinder, gasoline engine.

The slightest drizzle, however, changed some plans. Bulletin's Anjo Perez and Auto Review's Gil de los Reyes, who took the Roadster, had to put the roof back. But then, after a few minutes, the fickle weather changed moods again. The sun was shining in a few minutes. What were we in, we wondered, a James Bond movie or in the rerun of "The Avengers"?

FIVE German marques soon to be released in the Philippines

At the Tarlac area, we changed cars. From being a navigator, I was driving a 325CiA two-door coupé with a 5-speed automatic transmission. The steptronic transmission feature, meantime, was a blockbuster as I got speed when I needed it, particularly during overtaking. Through steptronic, located in the shifting lever, you can actually heighten engine speed sans the clutch.

On our way down from the Baguio Country Club, I drove a green BMW Touring, a four-door limousine. I activated the ASC because the rain made the winding roads of Kennon Road slippery. Traction control was in full gear, and driving and overtaking on winding road became a breeze. The radios of motoring journalists, of course, helped a lot as we guided each other in blind curves and corners.

The traction control of the BMW, (aside from having an ABS antilock brake system), also has an ASC or an automatic stability control+ traction and we got to maximize and got a feel of this during heavy downpour. ASC, through wheel speed sensor in each wheel, ensured us that no unstable driving situation results when drive power is applied particularly when the road is slippery.

Sir Ron and I took our turns in driving another car: a two-door sports coupé that's a 5-speed AT. It's a black Z3 3.0iA coupé. The output is a 231 hp with a 242 km/h top speed. BMW claims it is equipped with a DSC or a dynamic stability control.

The DSC functions almost the same as the ASC. The only difference is that the DSC works when the car makes a turn while the ASC acts upon the car while traveling on a straight line.

The passenger airbag in the dashboard even has a seat occupancy detection. When a child sits up front, the airbag doesn't activate. We know airbags could cause further injury to a child in minor accidents. A safety battery terminal or clamp, meanwhile, is also an added special feature. Should a major accident take place, electrical signals going to the engines are cut off except for the electricity needed for the activation of airbags and exterior lighting. This safety feature shuts down the engine and all other electrical sources of fuel explosions. And there goes the limitation of our test-drive activities. We didn't reach the stage where we could get to see these safety features ourselves.

All in all, the 608-km ride was a combination of spirited driving and, well, because we were in a convertible, a heightened appreciation of the passing surroundings in Baguio City, which we captured in excited photography.

We'll make great intelligence agents someday, working under a "secret" organization of President GMA. For a while there, BMW made us believe in that fantasy.

325I SEDAN

The all-around ultimate driving machine

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

HOW would you like to take turns driving not one, not three, but five different brand-new 2001 BMW cars from Manila to Baguio and back? This dream of an extended BMW multicar test drive, with overnight billeting at the Baguio Country Club, was actually achieved by 10 lucky motoring journalists last week, thanks to the new, media-friendly policy of the recently launched BMW Group Philippines under Mark Gilbert as president. (Pepito Alvarez is now the chair.)

For two days, Mr. Gilbert allowed us to put through their paces a convoy of gorgeous BMWs with a total price tag of P15,820,000: three variants of the 2001 3 Series—the 325ia four-door sedan, 325ia coupé, 325ia touring (estate wagon)—and two sports cars, the Z3 2.2i topdown roadster and the Z3 3.0i coupé. All five 2001 models are rear-wheel-drive cars powered by new-generation in-line 6-cylinder engines with increased power outputs, boosted torques and higher rev limits than the 2000 and older models.

While I found the lightning-fast Z3s exciting—the 225 hp @5900 rpm Z3 3.0i, for example, zooms to 100 kph in only six seconds—if I were allowed to choose, I'd take the 325i sedan. Among the five Ultimate Driving Machines we test-drove, it was the 325ia sedan that, to me, fulfilled to perfection the fabled BMW promise not only of awesome engine power, but also supreme road-handling precision and suave riding comfort with none of the vague steering, harshness and choppy ride of the Z3. Besides, among the five, the 325ia sedan was the perfect all-around vehicle, elegant yet athletic, comfortable yet tough and practical. And, at P2,550,000, it is the most affordable.

The driving pleasure offered by the 325ia 4-door sedan is explained by the fact that without folding rear seats, it has the most rigid structure of all the 2001 3 Series models. The sedan's strong unitized body-chassis structure is stiffer than that of the 325Cia convertible (which was not available for the test drive), the 325ia touring and the 325Cia coupé. The latter two have standard folding rear seats while convertibles are naturally not as rigid as closed-body cars. It appeared to me that all the 325 models had the same comfortable electrically adjustable leather front seats, with the driver's seat equipped with memory function. But cramped rear passenger space indicated that the sedan could comfortably seat only four adults, not five.

The updated 2.5-liter straight-six of the 325ia, which replaces the current 323i, produces max horsepower of 192 hp @ 6000 rpm, up from the 323i's 170 hp @ 5500 rpm. Torque has been increased to 245 lb-ft @ 3500 rpm from the previous 181-lb-ft. Other new features in the 325ia are a fully electronic throttle system that replaces the 323i's electromechanical, revision of the intake-path lengths of the dual resonance intake system to enhance performance, increased valve lift and reduced emissions that meet ULEV (Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle) standards compared to previous models' LEV standards. On the other hand, advanced engineering features such as the aluminum cylinder block, Double VANOS variable valve timing, electronically controlled engine cooling and BMW's Service Interval Indicator have been retained.

When it comes to safety, BMW is a leader. Its Fully Integrated Road Safety Technology (F.I.R.S.T.) incorporates active and passive safety components such as ABS with Dynamic Brake Control, a total of six airbags and the Head Protection System.

I drove the 325ia sedan from San Miguel, Tarlac to Lingayen, Pangasinan via Camiling and was immediately impressed by the car's superb body control, immense precision and finesse even when overtaking other vehicles or peeling into a curve be it in rainy or sunny weather. Optimum road grip, a supple ride and stability are guaranteed by the 3 Series' 4-wheel independent suspension, variable-assist rack-and-pinion steering and ASC+T (Automatic Stability Control + Traction).

The 5-speed automatic transmission of the 325ia comes with the Steptronic system as standard equipment. The Steptronic system activates the Sport mode when the driver pushes the shift lever into its M/S gate to the left of the Park-Reverse-Neutral-Drive plane. By flicking the lever forward, the driver upshifts to third gear manual (M3), M4 or M5 and by moving it downward, the driver downshifts to M2 or M1. Steptronic driving takes some time to master for those used to the "H" principle of the conventional manual transmission, but once you get used to it, watch yourself fly! Then you will realize why BMW is the undisputed benchmark in high-performance luxury cars.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: If at first you do succeed, try not to look astonished.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

CITY MEDIA CHALLENGE ROUND 1

Macalma, Mallari are best drivers

SATURDAY was a bright and sunny day—perfect weather for the 30-something journalists to test their driving skills on the specially designed track at the Manila Harbour Centre for the opening round of the City Media Challenge in partnership with Caltex.

With a time of 1:17.07, Deo Macalma of dzRH registered the best time in the 1.5 EXi category. Meanwhile, Matt Mallari (Motoring Today) led the 1.3 LXi category with a time of 1:16.38.

For the team standings, Team Passion Orange led the 1.3 LXi class by clocking a team time of 4:05.30. The first place finish gave the team, composed of Angelo Almonte (dzMM), Willie Caballes (Manila Bulletin), Matt Mallari (Motoring Today) and Bill Velasco (ABS-CBN/Metro), 25 championship points. Only 3 seconds behind with a time of 4:08.89, Team Sunburst Yellow—which includes Ferdie Baja (dzEC), Aaron Favila (Associated Press), Shirley Flores (BusinessWorld) and Deo Macalma (dzRH)—finished in second place to earn 22 points. Eric Soriano (Drive.com.ph), Andre Palma (Kotse.com), Tessa Salazar (INQUIRER) and Raymond Tribdino (Manila Times) of Team Supersonic Blue finished third—for 20 points—by clocking 4:10.89.

In the 1.5 EXi class, Team Sunburst Yellow clocked a total of 4:01.87 bagging the top slot, while Team Passion Orange and Team Supersonic Blue produced times of 4:07.23 and 4:07.55 to finish second and third, respectively.

The other media teams competing this season are: Team Formula Red—Raul Promeda (Motoring Today), Dodo Catacutan (Manila Bulletin), Joey Boiser (Drive.com.ph), Junep Ocampo (Philippine Star), Team Nighthawk Black—Ferman Lao (Kotse.com), Andy Vital (dzRH), Jess Reyes (K-Lite), Aida Sevilla-Mendoza (INQUIRER); Team Fresh Copper Metallic—Lester Dizon (Gadgets), Andy Sevilla (Sports Weekly), Warren Castillo and Beth Sanchez (BusinessWorld); Team Taffeta White—Conrad Cariño (Manila Times), Benj Ngo (Autoindustriya.com), Tim Alipalo (Associated Press), Jayson Jimenez (Auto Review); Jay Ortega (Gadgets) , Bernard de Lara (Tempo), Raul Virtudazo (dzBB), May Baetiong (BusinessWorld); and Team Iced Teal Blue—G.Dadlani (Autoindustriya.com), Eugene Limpin (Tempo), Miranda de Quiros (ABS-CBN) and Pinggot Zulueta (Manila Bulletin).

The City Media Challenge is presented by Honda Cars Philippines in partnership with Caltex. Official fuel for the season is Caltex Vortex while the official lubricant is Havoline Energy. Bridgestone/ Firestone is the official tire sponsor. Roll cages and sump guards are courtesy of Nodalo's Trading. Other sponsors are Manila Harbour Centre and AITECH. The event is organized by ADBM Resources, Activity Asia Association and Roadwise Motoring School. Round 2 of the City Media Challenge is set for June 16.

Is your vehicle smoke-belching?

TO ADDRESS the deepening problem of air pollution, the government has taken a bold step in implementing a forcible pollution-busting provision. Just recently, an antismoke belching law was arrayed through the Clean Air Act of 1999 also known as Republic Act 8749. This provision limits the registration of vehicles to those that passed the emission tests administered by the Land Transportation Office or other authorized private testing centers. Also, the act authorizes the LTO and its deputized agents to apprehend smoke belchers and confiscate their vehicle plates should they fail to pass the free acceleration test.

It is in this light that Isuzu Philippines Corp., your responsible partner, shares helpful hints in keeping your exhaust emissions in check. Black smoke is usually the consequence of improper vehicle handling, slack maintenance and upkeep. To reduce black smoke from your engine, here are some practical pointers:

- Follow your preventive maintenance schedule as stipulated in the owner's manual. Make sure that your vehicle is being serviced by a qualified technician.
- Ensure that you are using genuine parts for your vehicle.
- Avoid overloading.
- Avoid jackrabbit starts and unnecessary revving up of engine. This generates imbalance in the mixture of air and fuel giving way to the formation of harmful gases and particulate matter.
- Once in a while, take your vehicle on a long drive at high rpm (revolutions per minute), approximately 3,000 rpm, to flush out particulate matter normally trapped in the exhaust system
- Clean filters regularly, more often if your vehicle is frequently used under severe driving conditions (e.g. driving in dusty roads). In such cases, the air intake system is usually clogged up causing improper combustion of fuel.

Eliminate the hassles of dingy exhaust emissions. Gear up your own vehicle and keep those MMDA (Metro Manila Development Authority) guys from ripping your plate off.

Now it is everybody's responsibility. The move toward a smoke belching-free metro is our first step toward a cleaner air and healthier society.

Best provincial bus operator

VICTORY Liner has been chosen anew as the country's best provincial bus operator by the Safety Organization of the Philippines Inc. (Sopi) for the year 2001. The firm has received the same award in 1991.

Two of its drivers were also chosen by the Sofi as most outstanding drivers of the year. They are Virgilio Susi, 16 years in service, Ayala-Olongapo route; and Eliseo Obina, 10 years in service, Caloocan-Olongapo route.

Victory Liner continues to strengthen its commitment to move people better...safer.

Volvo S60: Safety is intelligent interaction

THE SAFETY level of a car is so much more than a number of single components. Safety can never be measured and decided by the number of airbags. It is built up and measured in a completely different way, a holistic way in which all the different safety aspects of the entire car are taken into measure. Safety may be called the art of engineering: the meticulous work that is decisive for how the parts of the structure and the components have been designed from the beginning, how they have been tested and evaluated to decide how they will perform in the real-life system interaction—in an accident. Here, the Volvo Car Corp. experience, knowledge and resources within the area of safety play a major role in the development of cars.

Protecting the occupants in a crash is a matter of maintaining a high level of compartment integrity. This means that the protective zone surrounding the occupants, the safety "cage," must withstand as much as possible to secure as much space as possible for the occupants.

For the S60 this has meant a number of adaptations and modifications to the front and rear structures to make the car more efficient and just as safe as the S80 and V70 models since it is slightly smaller than its platform siblings. So, even with shorter overhangs, the efficiency of the member structures has been maintained.

Shorter but equally safe

The shorter front for the S60 has the same type of front and side member system as the V70 with the bumper rail inside its soft nose but with different endings. The bumper rail is designed to take up the initial force before the inner structure is engaged in the energy absorption.

At the rear, the member structure has been adapted to provide a deformation behavior in order to maintain compartment integrity and allow all doors to open easily also after the car has been hit from behind. The rear doors of the S60 have a design that takes them further back than any other Volvo model thus creating the need for a specific solution, just like the shorter front, to make it more effective. The fuel tank is safely located above and slightly forward of the rear axle center.

Control of the course of deformation in a car body, is achieved by the choice of materials; the design and position of the energy absorbing members; the position of reinforcement elements; and the positions of weld spots, creases and folds in the inner and outer body structure. All these added together decides how a safety structure behaves when being subjected to impact force.

Safe inside and out

In the same way that the outside of the car is supposed to protect the occupants from outer force by reducing the collision severity for the occupants, the interior must make sure that it provides as good as possible protection against occupant impacts. Once again, it is the interaction between exterior and interior safety systems that decide the level of protection—the intelligent interaction. The interior safety systems of the S60 use the same solutions as the other platform relatives but have been carefully adapted according to the specific prerequisites of the S60.

Interior protection in a car is first and foremost provided by safety belts, the single most important safety feature in a car. In the Volvo S60 the safety belts are fitted with pretensioners and load limiters. This means that they are able to sense and adapt the way they are activated to provide the best possible protective level in every specific situation depending on the severity of the crash. Again, the intelligent interaction plays a decisive role: the belts act and "think" together with the dual-stage airbags, driver's and passengers' sides. This is the second protective step the car will take in an accident, i.e. the impact force calls for airbag activation.

If needed, for instance in a high-speed crash and/or when the impact force is high enough, the bag naturally deploys with full capacity to provide optimum protection.

Protection from all angles

The side airbag is designed to protect the pelvic, abdominal and chest areas from hitting the door or the B-pillar. It reduces the effect of the hitting or intruding object on the body by providing protection between the two, and by moving the body away from the intruding structure. The side airbags are located in the seat backs and move with the seats in order to protect the occupants from an optimum position. They are also a supplementary protection that work with the structure of the car, in this case the SIPS system with its energy dissipating seat tubing and centrally located box section.

The occupants' heads are protected inner structure or side window from impacts, and also from hitting the collision obstacle, in side crashes, by the inflatable curtain—IC. This has been adapted to the geometry of the S60. Another big advantage with the system is that it also protects the heads of rear seat occupants in a side collision by covering the entire length of the side windows and door frames inside the car.

Interior surfaces that may pose a risk for a head impact in a crash have been made "friendlier," thanks to special design, their attachments and choice of materials. In some areas additional energy absorption padding have been fitted behind the panels to make the car rather than the occupants absorb as much of the impact as possible.

Introduced in 1998 on the S80, the WHIPS system seats are now found on all Volvo's models. The front seats are specially designed to yield in a collision from the rear and avoid the dangerous reciprocating neck and head movements of the occupants that cause whiplash injuries.

Introduced in the Volvo V70, and now a part of the S60, is also the ISOfix child safety system which has the purpose of making traveling in cars safer and easier for children.

Security by satellite, remote control

The personal security is also a natural part of the total safety standard of the Volvo car.

In recent years the need for increased protection for person and property has become evident in many places. At the same time, the continuously improved electrical and software systems of both car and society have opened up new possibilities for car communications.

Personal security today comprises many systems, from strategic lighting to exact car positioning by satellite.

The term security also comprises smaller but maybe equally important features when it comes to the personal and property security. Such features include laminated side windows that can withstand violence; approach light that illuminates the area around the car when approaching it in the dark; home safe lighting that lights up the area in front of the car after it has been switched off and locked; different blocking systems, different levels of alarm systems.

Viking Cars Inc. is the exclusive authorized dealer of Volvo passenger cars in the Philippines. The Volvo showroom is located at 2272 Chino Roces Ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo Extension), Makati City. Visit the Volvo website at www.volvocars.ph for more of the Volvo S60.

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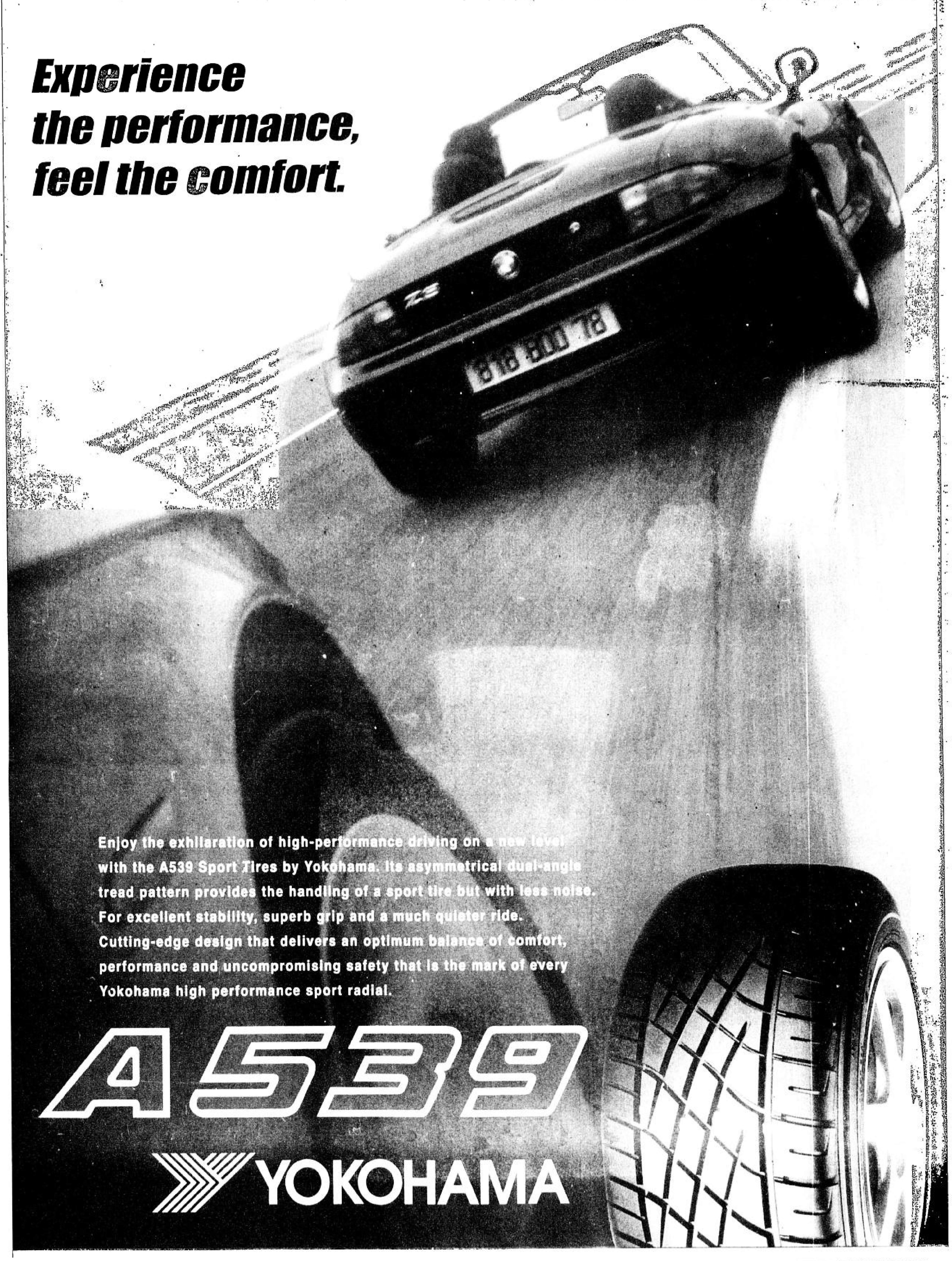

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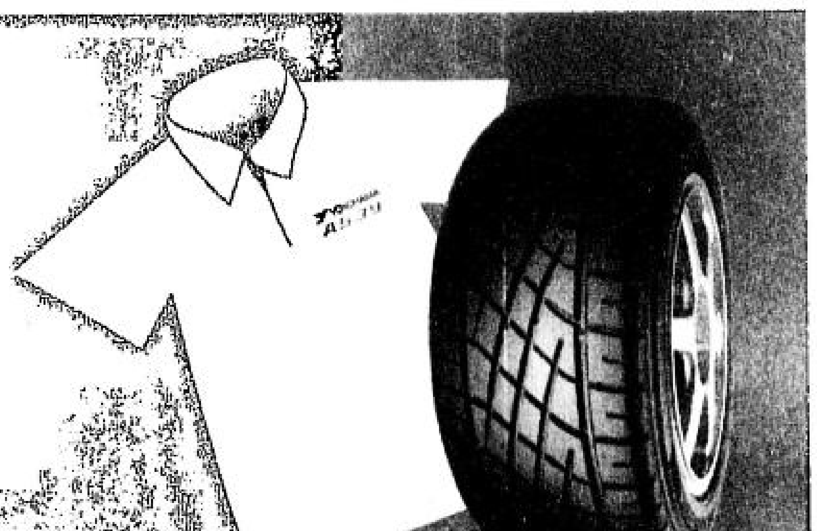

Promo runs from April 1 to May 31, 2001. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0377 Series of 2001.

MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

How to choose the car with the best value

BY VERNON B. SARNE

(First of two parts)

THE DIFFICULTY of decision-making when buying a new car is way up there with finding a spouse. You rush the process and you either get a complete lemon or suffer a breakdown in the middle of the trip. Of course, you can always dispose a car, but you need not go through the hassle of unloading some unwanted property just because you didn't think long and hard when you acquired it.

"Buying your first car is one of life's most exciting experiences. It's like your first major success in life. Make sure it stays that way by choosing the car with the best value your money can buy. Even when you're ready to move on and upgrade, you won't have to ever regret having made that first choice," shares Tonette Lee, Nissan Motor Phils. senior manager for product and marketing.

With so many TV, radio, and print ads competing to convince you, virtually all vehicles seem appealing. And no thanks to various promos and financing schemes, getting the make and model you really want has not been harder than it is today. After all, it's not like you're merely buying a cell phone. You are giving your bank account a lethal blow.

Let us offer you our two cents' worth of car buying tips, which we are dividing into two parts. The first discusses the basic things to remember when buying a new car, while the second zeroes in on the specific preferences of Filipino car buyers based on actual sales data and car financing figures. Note that these are tips on buying a new—not used—car. Used cars require an entirely different and more meticulous selection process. We'll tackle this in a separate piece.

As in any human activity, knowledge reigns supreme in buying a new car. Ignore this and there's a good chance you'll end up regretting your next car purchase. Almost everyone thinks he or she knows the basics of buying a car. But if buying a car were so simple, disappointed and frustrated complaints wouldn't be piling up on the customer relations desk of car dealers and manufacturers. Indeed, ignorance begets much grief.

So please read on. This won't take 10 minutes of your time.

Know what you want and need. You can't make a vehicle purchase like you're groping in the dark. Even if you're still not sure of the exact make and model, it's important to know what type of vehicle you want and need. We differentiate and underscore the words "want" and "need," because sometimes the car you want is not necessarily the car you need. It may be that you really want a sporty compact sedan, but reality dictates that your family really needs a spacious van.

Will you use the vehicle merely as a daily driver to and from the office, or will you also use it to constantly shuttle stuff, like merchandise if you have a business? Will you use it merely to impress your golf buddies, or will you use it to fulfill your role as a family man?

It's always wise to arrive at the best compromise between a dream car and a vehicle of actual necessity. In most cases, you'll have to drop your emotional or esthetic attachments to a particular model in favor of a really wise choice. What good is a cramped coupé, for instance, if you can't bring the kids with you?

"Value for money is better than looks," Diamond Motors' Maurice Dizon agrees.

Of course, if you're buying a luxury car, it's a different matter altogether. More often than not, buyers of steeply priced automobiles have already fixated on a particular make. It's almost always difficult to persuade a Mercedes-Benz fan to get a BMW instead, unless a disappointment in the product is involved. But just in case you're one of the new rich, or you've just won in the recent elections, and you have no idea what ridiculously expensive car to get, it's advisable to take a crash course on the reputation of various high-end carmakers.

"When deciding to purchase your first luxury car, a professional dealer would be able to give you a good comparative value analysis of the different brands. The car that gives you the most benefit at the price you feel is reasonable is the car for you," Viking Cars (Volvo) president and CEO Albert Arcilla says. "Also, check out the image and character of the brand and model. Your first luxury car will be your statement of yourself and what you have achieved."

Know your budget. How much do you have? Are you buying outright or on finance? Shop only for cars whose price is within your financial capabilities. If you're buying cash, you won't have much to mind afterward. In some cases, car insurance is even waived by the dealer if you pay cash.

If you need financing assistance, banks will be more than willing to help you. At a price, of course. But since you can't afford to pay the full price of the car right away, you have to bear the going interest rates with a grin. Bank of the Philippine Islands, Metrobank and Unionbank are some of the banks with a reputable auto loan service.

Be on the lookout for promos. See if you want a zero down payment but longer-term plan or a short-term plan that requires a significant down payment. Check also if there's any kind of assistance you can avail from a certain carmaker. Ford Group Phils., for instance, has its own G-Financing. This graduated financing scheme provides the market the opportunity to shell out a very low down payment and go on to pay gradually increasing installments.

"This is the best time for car buyers. We now see the best deals and values available to them," says Ford Group Phils. vice president for marketing and sales Dave Gutman. A car buyer needs to remember that spending doesn't stop with the car's price tag. There are many other aspects of owning a car that need consideration. "Entry-level buyers most often focus on car features and unit price. The total cost of owning—including insurance, maintenance, fuel consumption, resale value, customer care, reliability of seller—is usually not considered," laments Honda Cars Phils. AVP for corporate communications Arnel Doria.

Oh, if you're paying cash, learn to haggle. Car prices are never fixed. Prices have a so-called dealer's margin your sales agent will not tell you about.

Know what's available. Yes, the excitement that goes with purchasing a new car—especially if it's a first—is enough to make you blind to other options. Almost always, a customer wants to buy the car today, drive it home today, and park it in the garage today. If you can help it, try postponing the purchase for a little while, step back, and see what other cars in the same category the market has to offer. You'd be surprised at the many facts you'll discover. There is nothing worse than realizing you've settled for the second-best.

Know how to look at and compare spec sheets of competing vehicles. Learn how to interpret basic information like engine displacement, horsepower, dimensions, and standard amenities. Nothing beats the peace of mind that comes with a knowledgeable purchase.

And never, ever allow any salesperson to sweet-talk you into buying a car you are not too sure of. Don't be afraid to say no and to move on to checking the next car.

Know the vehicle of your choice. Of all the tips here, this is the most important. Do not bring out your checkbook until you are 100 percent sure you have an acceptable knowledge of the car. You can have a fair idea of the vehicle's quality by reading the spec sheet, asking people who own the same car, reading test-drive reviews, and ultimately, test-driving the vehicle yourself.

Do not make the mistake of buying a car you've never taken for a spin. And do not settle for a one-block drive. Insist on spending a relatively ample time behind the wheel. You need to see how the car performs, rides and handles. Drive it with the stereo turned off, so you'll hear unusual sounds if there are any.

"Surf the Net. You'll be surprised at what you can find there," Gutman adds.

Lastly, be extra attentive to industry rumors to know if the model you're buying isn't on its way out soon. You'll definitely feel short-changed once you see advertisements for a new model a few weeks after you've bought the older version.

Know the dealer you'll buy the car from. If you think it doesn't matter where you get your vehicle from, you can't be more wrong. Owning a vehicle is a continuous process and doesn't stop with the purchase. Finding a really good and reputable dealership that will take care of your after-sales needs, is just as important as making the right car choice. Check their facilities, take note of how their personnel deal with customers, see if they are professional and prompt with the way they conduct their business.

"It's always best to buy from a dealer most convenient to you. Convenience could mean location, relations with the dealership owner, and completeness of products and services. It's not always the price that matters," Toyota Motor Phils. sales vice president Danny Isla explained. He should know, having spent many years of his professional life at the helm of Toyota Alabang.

Dealerships and service centers are supposed to relieve you of a headache when it comes to maintaining your car. They shouldn't be the cause of it.

(Next week: The most preferred cars by Filipino buyers and why they are so.)

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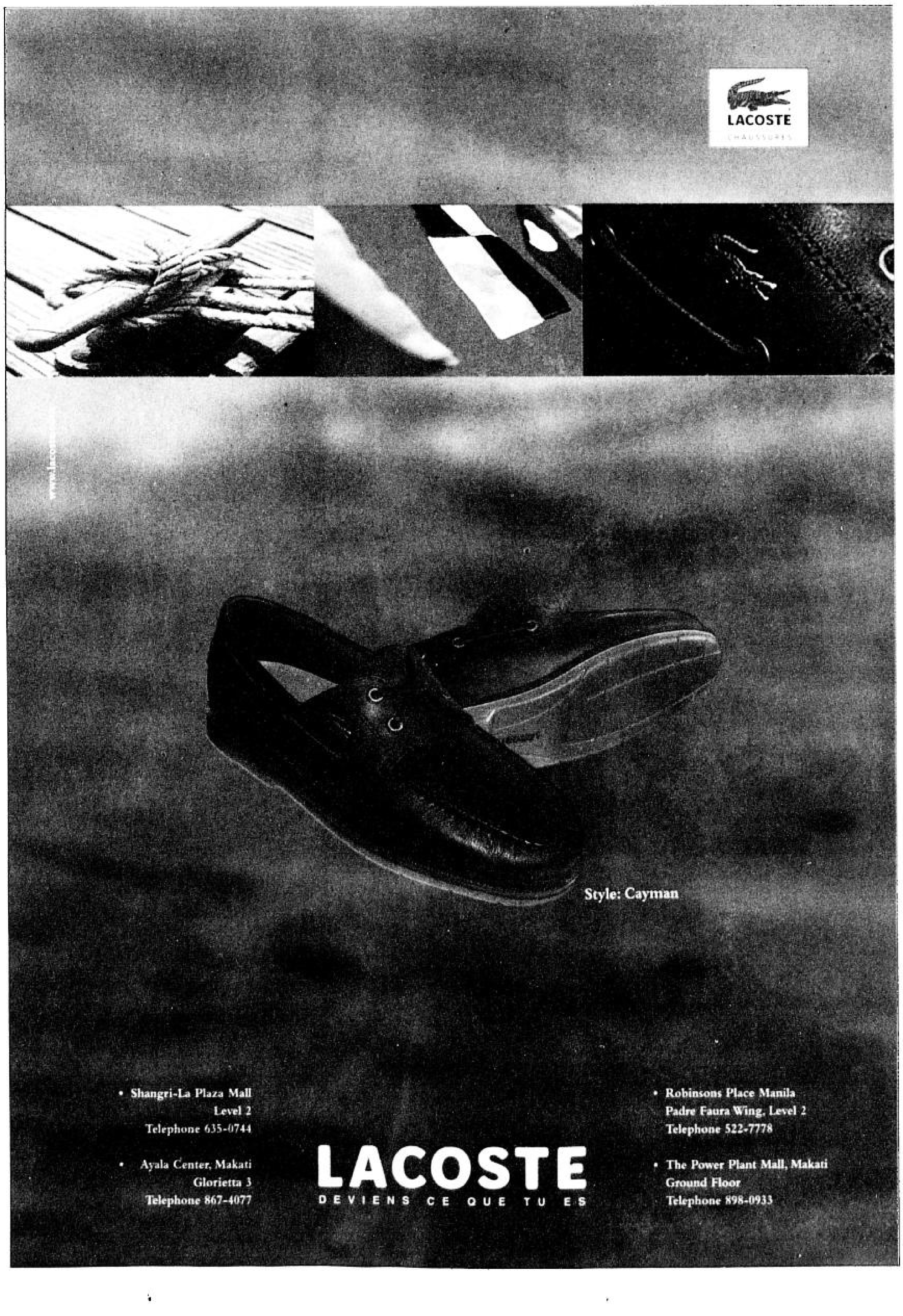

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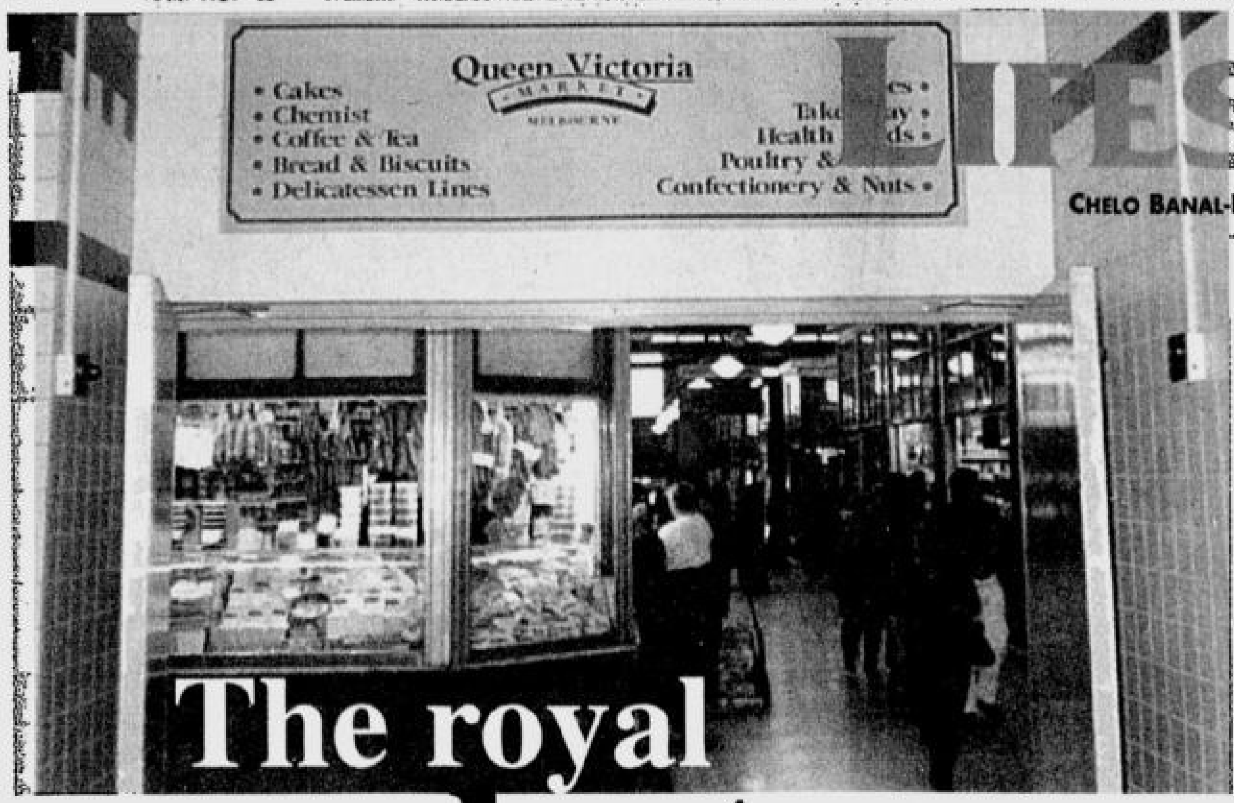

The royal market

Besides a past, the Queen Victoria Market in Melbourne has a perfect present; visitors go there to buy and soak in the Old-World atmosphere

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO

IF you love markets, you'll fall in love with Melbourne, the charming capital city of the state of Victoria in Australia. There are all kinds of markets in Melbourne—roofed or open ones, retail or wholesale ones, specialized or multicultural ones. And there's so much to buy you can personally experience what travel brochures promise when they want to lure you to this or that city. Yes, you can shop till you drop at Melbourne's markets.

Everybody's favorite is, of course, the Queen Victoria Market. It sits on 7 hectares of land, some of which used to be cemetery and school lots. Now, don't let that spoil the fun of discovering the festival of flavors sold by the pound or the sense and sensibilities stowed away in the deepest recesses of this historical market.

Of Melbourne's myriad markets, the Queen Vic has stood pat, refusing to cater to modern demands in a progressive city. It has been developed, redeveloped and operated by the Melbourne City Council, thanks to public pressure, and has been continuously supported by merchants, shoppers and other strangers over the last 120 years.

Two blocks make up the market. The smaller block houses the meat, dairy, produce and food court. The larger block, known as the upper market, consists of sheds A to M, where you can shop for all kinds of dry goods, from fabrics to rugs, tea towels to souvenir koala stuffed toys, exotic jewelry to handyman tools. These open stalls have vendors who allow you to bargain. Start at half the asking price then work yourself slowly up, by nickel and dime, until the vendor gives in.

Merchants pay for the rent of their stalls and take away their goods at day's end. Sometimes you can pass by the market when you're in a tour bus and see them carting away their merchandise, and you think to yourself business must be good for generation to generation of these traders to keep coming back the next market day to peddle their wares.

And now, let's do some shopping. No crown jewels here or elegant robes, only the freshest fruits and vegetables, including those that have been organically grown, which are available in a separate section of their own along with free-range and organic eggs.

The Meat, Fish and Rabbit area, which is unbelievably clean, sells nothing but fresh meats—beef, pork, poultry, rabbit, kangaroo—and a staggering selection of seafood,

THE ROYAL/ p.C6

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Two newly hired Chinese chefs are beefing up the menu of this restaurant that's been popular for its dimsum

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Cantonese served here, with fresh touches

By Alex Y. Vergara

NO need to fret over the use of MSG in this Cantonese restaurant. Unlike in the movies, its Chinese chefs would never dream of touching the dreaded seasoning nor produce a dish that's overcooked or heavily seasoned. Master chef Benson Fok and assistant chef James Ng would rather look for the freshest ingredients and strive as much as possible to retain their unique scents, flavors and textures.

This culinary outlook convinced Joseph Kong, the Heritage Hotel's new general manager, to hire them to introduce new touches to Hua Ting's menu. Fok and Ng have been slowly introducing new dishes while beefing up (no pun intended) bestsellers since they joined the hotel several months ago.

"They can cook authentic Chinese dishes the way diners want them," says Kong. "But they have to tell us in advance to give the chefs enough time to do the marketing."

Fok began his cooking career in China before joining the Tung Lok hotel group in Hong Kong, then under British rule. He worked with some of the best restaurants in the former Crown Colony before that. Ng worked with Singapore Hilton after a stint in the Middle East.

"Cantonese cooking is regarded by many as the finest among China's regional dishes," says Kong. "We hope to draw from the experiences of our two chefs to provide diners with a fusion of Singaporean and Chinese fare."

Regulars can still get to savor such all-time favorites as the Peking Duck, Po Lan Chai or braised spinach, Crystal Prawn Balls, Stir-fried Beef, Pork Spare Ribs and Lemon Chicken. Of course, the entire range of dimsum items the restaurant has become known for is still available.

Competitive

Hua Ting's prices, Kong assures, are competitive. "People have had the impression that our prices are high," he says. "They're almost within the same range as our direct competitors. We offer ambiance and value for money."

Well, at P1,500 a pop, its Superior Shark's Fin certainly doesn't fit the budget category. Fok has recently added the pricey item to the menu. Considered by many as a delicacy—just take the environmentalist friend somewhere else—tender shark's fin is wrapped in egg white and soaked in its own clear sauce. Fok then garnished it with a cracked crab pincher and gold shaving.

Fok's other specialty includes the Abalone braised either in tender spinach or Taiwanese *pechay*. The savory broth, he says, was achieved through the proper combination of ingredients without overcooking. He was probably just playing coy, but we'd still be clueless even if he chose to reveal his secret.

CHEF James Ng and master chef Benson Fok

The Roast Duck is to die for, figuratively. The oven-cooked bird comes with a crispy layer of skin that melts in the mouth after leaving one's lips with a layer of oily sheen. Well, you only live once. Then there's the equally rich Suckling Pig we still have to taste to be able to draw comparisons with our *lechon*. "It's totally different," says Kong.

Bird's nest, by the way, is more popular among Filipinos as an essential ingredient to Nido soup. But in Kong's book (yes, the GM is also a wizard in the kitchen), bird's nest is cooked either in coconut milk or chicken broth, seasoned with rock sugar and, believe it or not, served as dessert.

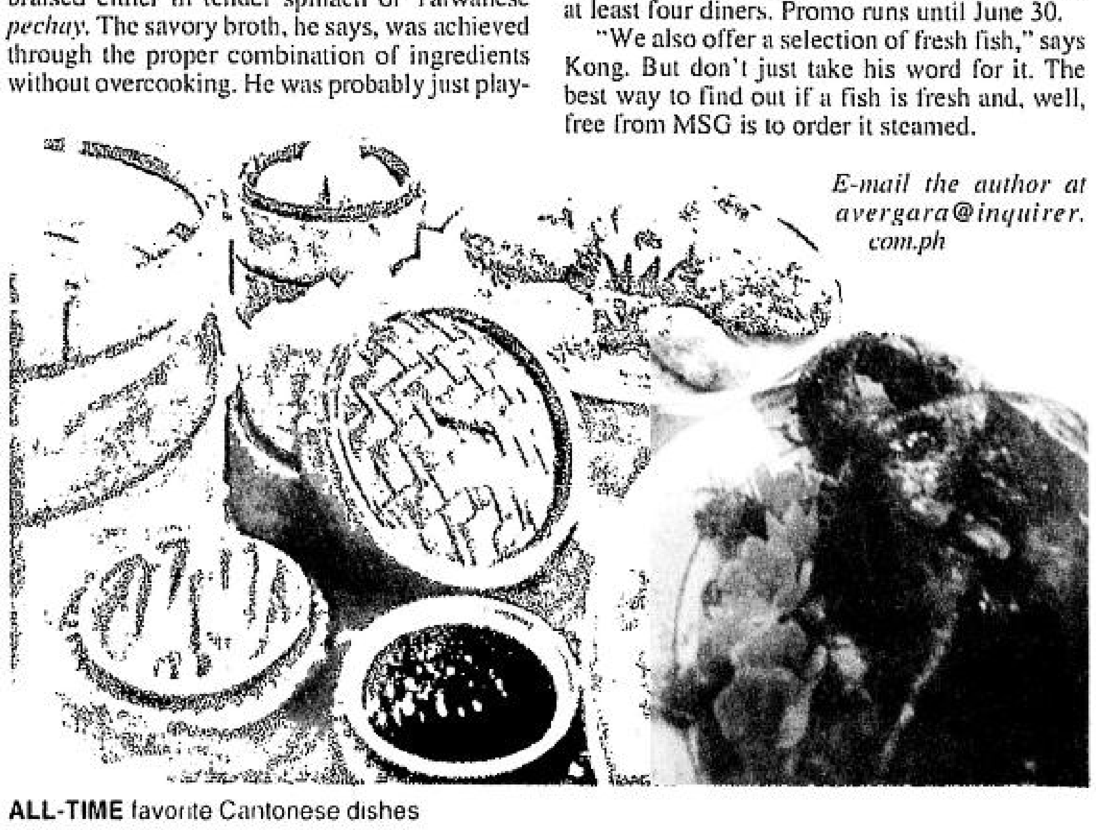
"Order these dishes if you want to impress a client or a special friend," he says. "But if you want to have lunch or dinner with the entire family, we offer cheaper set menus."

A typical set menu can set back a family of 10 by P8,000: The 10-course package includes: Sautéed Sliced Fish with Chili Bean Paste, Sautéed Prawns, Hong Kong-style, Fried Crispy Chicken, Braised Pork Spare Rib, Sautéed Sliced Beef with Ginger and Leeks, Braised Bean Curd topped with Golden Mushroom and Dried Scallop and Yang Chow Fried Rice. The lauriat also comes with Suckling Pig for appetizer, Szechwan Hot and Sour soup for starters and a choice between Chilled Mango Pudding or fresh fruits for dessert.

To make its new menu even more tempting, Hua Ting is giving diners a 20-percent discount on more than a hundred à la carte and dimsum items. A free serving of roasted chicken awaits at least four diners. Promo runs until June 30.

"We also offer a selection of fresh fish," says Kong. But don't just take his word for it. The best way to find out if a fish is fresh and, well, free from MSG is to order it steamed.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



ALL-TIME favorite Cantonese dishes

The Maya Kitchen
CULINARY ARTS CENTER
presents

Pambaon Meals, Atbp.

School reopens soon and once again, students will be making the trek back to their classrooms and, of course, the cafeteria. But with most families trimming their budgets it's best to find ways on how you can save when your kids go school-bound.

Maya Kitchen share some delicious, healthy, practical and cost-friendly suggestions. Here, you'll learn how to whip up dishes your kids will surely give a grade of "A". Check out the schedules below.

ONE DAY SPECIAL

Pambaon "Ulam" (no preservatives): June 2 (Sat.) 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Tapa, Pork and Chicken Tocino, Corned Beef, Skinless Longanisa, Embutido. Bonus: Atchara P750.00

Pambaon "Snacks": June 2 (Sat) 1:30 – 5 p.m., Roast Beef Sandwich, Monudo Roll, Fillet of Fish, Fruity Chicken, Steak Chasseur including packaging ideas P750.00

Catering: June 9 (Sat.) 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Portion control, costing, inventory, table layout, equipment sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes such as Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All-Meat Paella, 3 types of fried rice and special desserts P1,500.00

Maya Quick & Easy Gulaman Delights: June 9 (Sat.) 3 – 5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Coffee Jelly, Almond Jelly, Fruity Chewy Salad, 24-Hour Salad, Fresh Crab Salad, and Buko-Pandan. With food styling presentation P350.00

Kakanin: June 14 (Thu.) 9 - 1 p.m. Puto, Cuchinta, Cassava Bibingka, Pichi-Pichi, Maja Blanca. Special feature: Maya Bibingka, Puto and Tamales P600.00

Restaurant Operations: June 16 (Sat.) 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, etc. Proven techniques on profitable sevice operations with free snacks P1,500.00

Chinese Cooking: June 16 (Sat.) 9 am - 1 p.m. Nido Soup, Pata Tim, Fried and Steamed Siomai, Chinese Lumpia, Chinese Dumpling, Fried Noodles. P750.00

Japanese Cooking: June 23 (Sat.) 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Miso Soup, Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi, Basic Sushi preparation P750.00

Baking with Institutional Mixes: June 23 (Sat.) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Pretzel, Hotdog on Stick, Mango Samurai, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Includes lecture on cost profit analysis P500.00

Pasta: June 30 (Sat.) 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Cannelloni; assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettuccini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra). Bonus: homemade pasta making P600.00

The Best of Maya Cakes & Pastries: JUne 30 (Sat.) 1:30 – 5 p.m. Tiramisu, Sans Rival, Crunch Cake, White & Black Forest, Queen Elizabeth P600.00

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON:

Integrated Workshop on Waitering & Bartending: June 2 & 9 (Sat.) 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Coverage: Creative techniques for efficient table setting and attractive arrangement, napkin folding and skirting; Suggested selling techniques, meeting, greeting and seating of guest; Use of magic words; Order taking; Table setting standards (American, Russian and French style); Setting up service station and checkpoint; Serving beverage and entree; Bartending basics; Cocktail mixing and garnish; and Personality Enhancement. P2,000 (free lunch)

Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: June 5-8 or 19-22 (T-F) 9 a.m. 1 p.m. Coverage: menu planning, international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salad, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch P2,500.00

Basic Baking: June 6-8 or 20-22 (W-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast bread and more. P2,000.00

Basic Cake Decoration: June 9 & 16 (Sat.) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals in cake decorating: coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic border, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Free decorating tips. P2000.00

Cooking I (Basic Cooking). For Messman, Stewards and Beginners: June 13-16 (W-S) or June 26-29 (T-F) 1:30 – 5 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meat and poultry dishes; Techniques of de-boning chicken and fish; basic garnishing; Table setting and napkin folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,200.00

Fore reservations and inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph

Delightful treats

GRAB the chance to collect six Pokémon items for every purchase of any of three KFC Chuckie Meals: BBQ Chicken Burger Meal, Spaghetti Meal and Chicken Meal. Enjoy these delicious Chuckie Meals and bring home Raichu, Blastoise, Meawth, Psyduck, Poliwhirl and Vileplume. Promo is available in all KFC stores nationwide.

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Omega
plus

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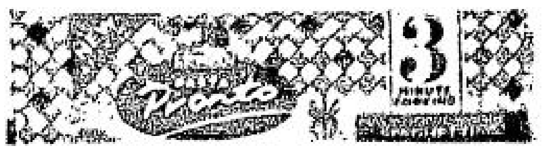
Pronto
3
MINUTE COOKING



SAN Remo launches Pasta Pronto, the first and only pasta in the market that can be cooked in only three minutes. The new San Remo Pasta Pronto is made thinner and lighter, yet still made the traditional San Remo way—from 100 percent Durum wheat, the source of great pasta. It comes in six varieties: Spaghetti, Macaroni, Penne, Spirals, Rollini and Fusilli, and is available in 300g packs.

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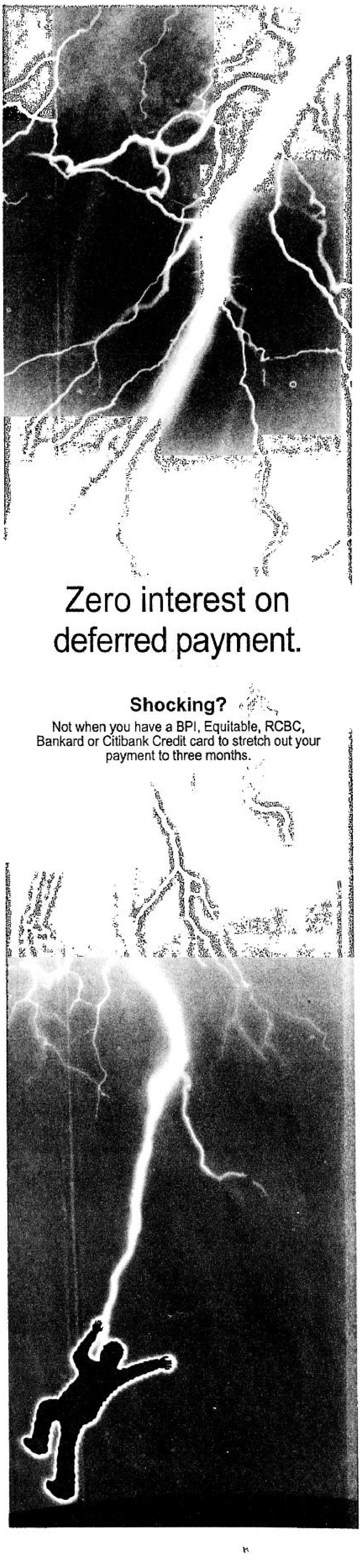

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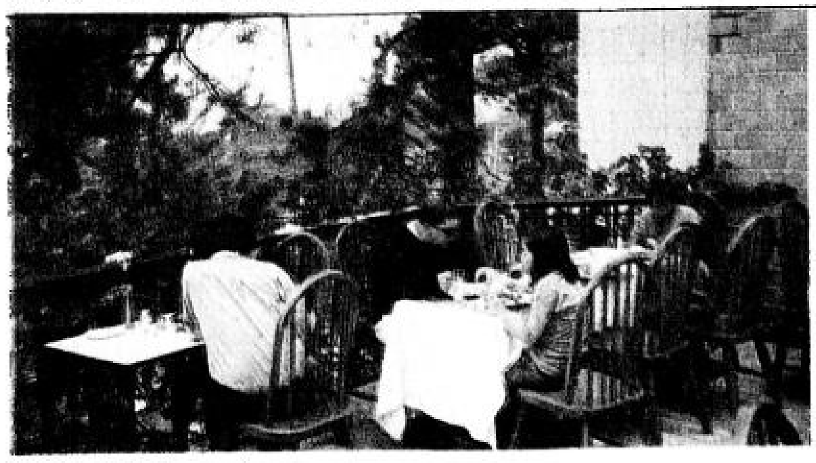
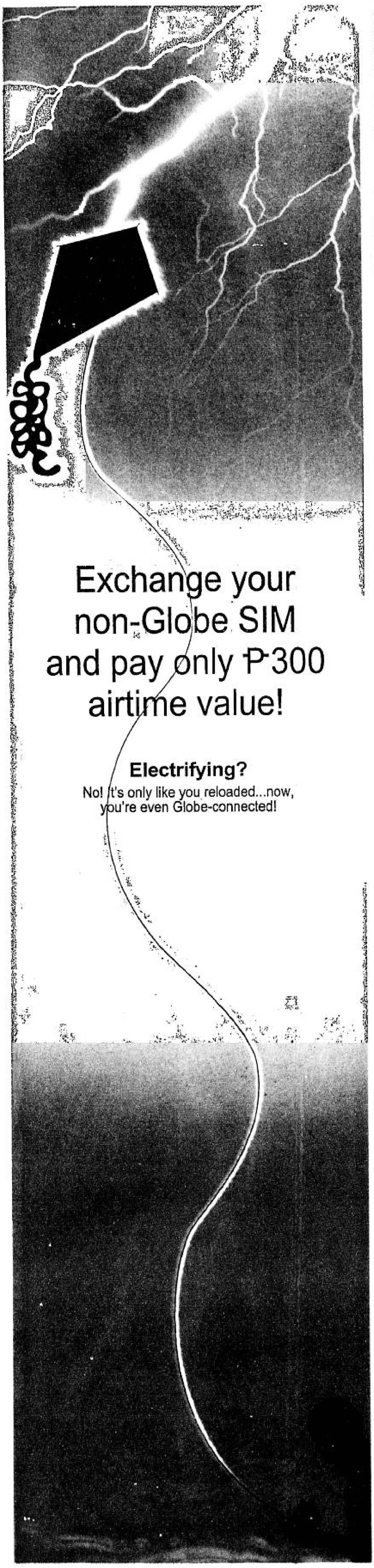


DINING al fresco on the terrace



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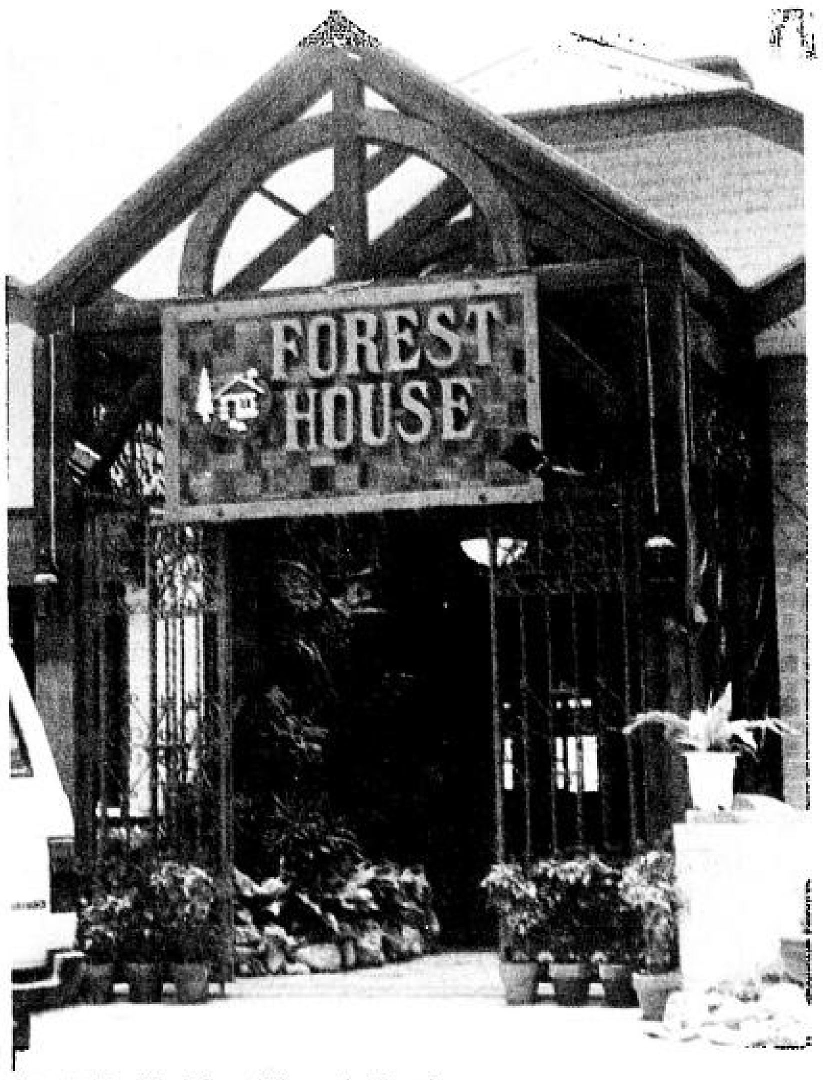


FAÇADE of the Forest House in Baguio

COZY CORNER. Waiting area at Forest House

Baguio's new foodie haven has the warmth of a log cabin and a country look

Treasures in the Forest

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY CATHY BABAO GUBALLA

THERE'S a gem of a restaurant in Baguio that is owned and managed by a trio of young entrepreneurs who have chosen to return to the city of their birth.

Ari and Racquel Verzosa had been flying for the national carrier since the mid-1980s. They met at Philippine Airlines and eventually got married. Ten years and two children later, Racquel decided to give up her career and attend to the children. Three years later, Ari followed suit and they "migrated" to Baguio, where Ari was born and raised. Their first business venture was a computer school for children on busy Session Road.

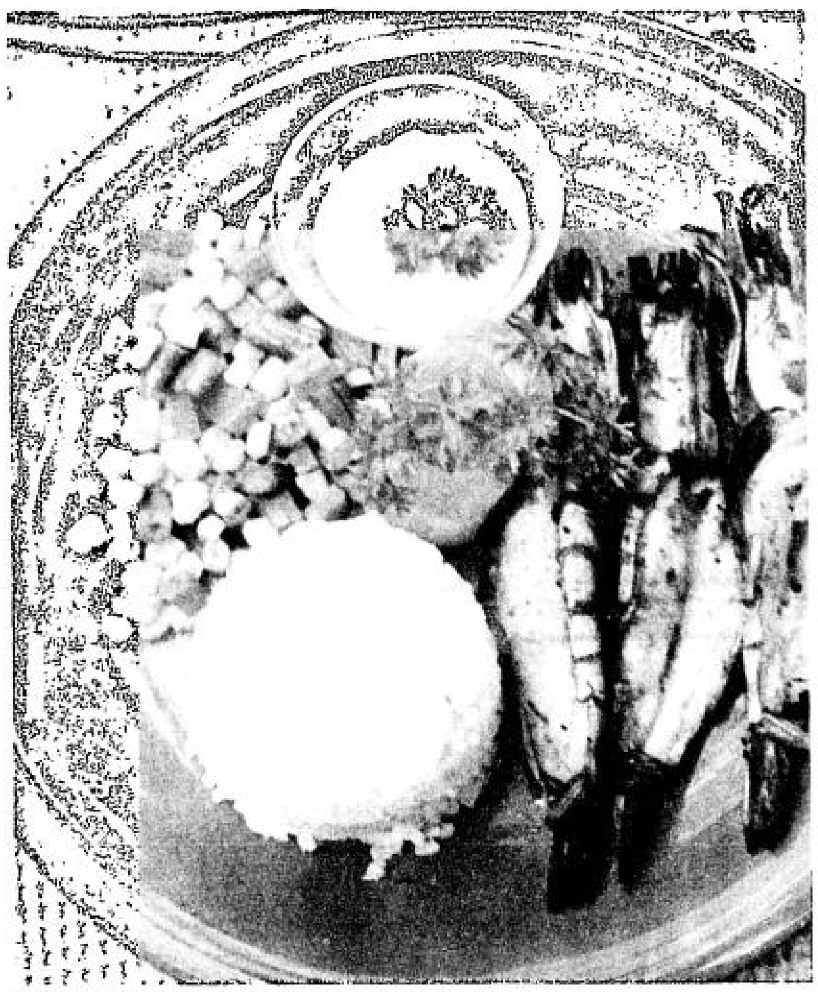
Drawing from their years of travel and experience, the couple, with cousin Alvin Verzosa, decided to put up a casual yet upscale restaurant on Loakan Road, a hundred meters or so from that other Baguio institution called Nevada Inn, where an array of shops can now be found.

"Ari and Alvin come from a family that cooks well and loves to eat," says Racquel. Alvin spent 15 years in San Francisco managing different restaurants and running the family-owned franchise of Country Waffles in San Diego, California. With Ari and Raquel's training in service and Alvin's eye for detail and penchant for good food, the trio makes a good team.

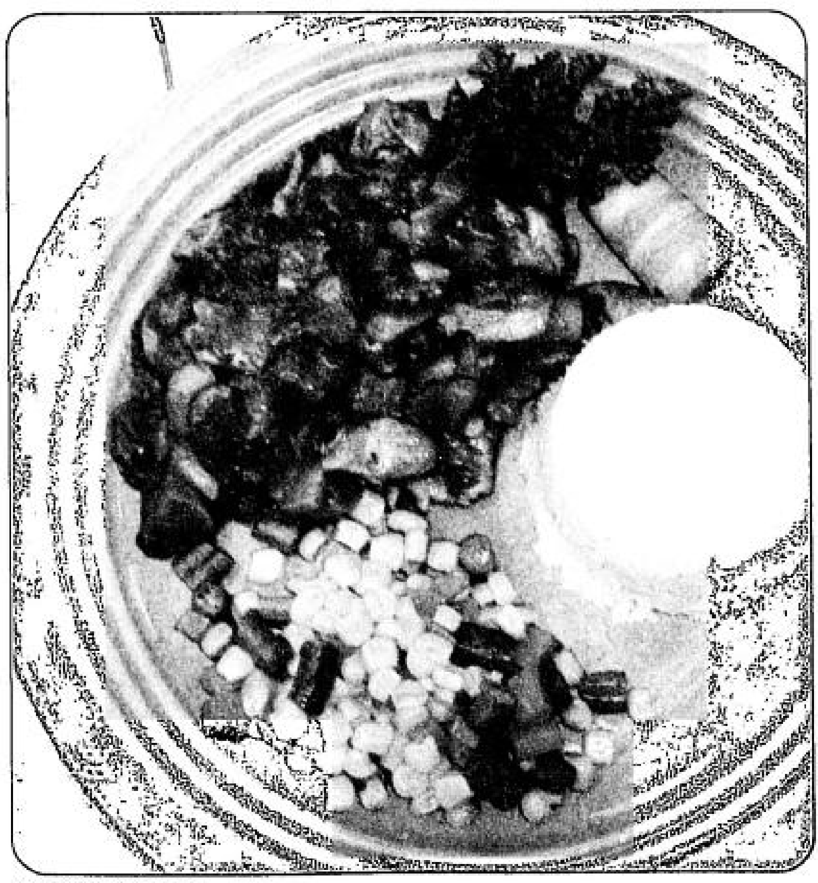
Warmth of a log cabin

Stepping into Forest House (074-304-4453) is like entering a gracious and warm log cabin. The foyer is filled with lush plants from which a manmade waterfall gently cascades. In the foyer are an armchair and a sofa where you and your kids can plop down to read a favorite book or magazine while waiting to be seated. There is a small, brick fireplace to warm you on chilly evenings, which in Baguio happens more often than not.

On one side of the restaurant is a coffee and tea bar that boasts of an excellent selection of coffees and teas from Chicago-based Coffeemasters. On the opposite side is a pasta bar where Forest House's chef whips up pasta. The overall look is country, complete with the de rigueur collectibles that adorn the various walls and nooks of the storybook restaurant.



TREASURES FROM THE SEA. Succulent grilled prawns



CHICKEN Alexis

The best part of the restaurant is the al fresco dining at the terrace where one seems to be transported to another place and time. On the day that we dined there we overheard a European lady gush, "Oh, it reminds me so much of home." It must have been the crisp, cool air, the pink bougainvilleas and the breathtaking view of the mountains. The ambiance was perfect and the food, as we were to discover later, just as delightful.

Combinations of cuisine

Forest House's chefs spent many years in several of Manila and Baguio's top restaurants—Tagaytay Highlands, Mario's, Baguio Country Club and the Manila Pen. Their baker, a Baguio resident, was at Camp John Hay for many years. The cuisine is a mix of Spanish, American and Italian. No chateaubriand or *paella* here but there are other equally memorable dishes.

There is an array of pasta to choose from—Puttanesca with capers and black olives, Country Garden Linguini with Mozzarella, Fettuccini Carbonara with smoked ham and wild mushrooms and the list goes on and on. The salads—Grilled Chicken Caesar, Smoked Salmon Salad and Forest House—are crisp, green and very tasty. The Salpicado is tops, with beef so tender and just the right amount of garlic. Their grilled prawns are succulent and the Chicken Alexis in mushroom sauce and red wine is quite a treat. Special mention goes to the iced tea drinks that come in various flavors.

Of course, you can't go to Baguio and not end your meal with a serving of fresh strawberries. Forest House tops them with a dollop of fresh cream and a dash of cinnamon. In this forest, you can throw dietary caution to the wind.

Ari and Racquel are owners of a rare breed. They do not hesitate to bus tables and serve the guests themselves, especially when the house is full. "The airline training certainly came in handy," Racquel says with a grin. The staff at Forest House is warm and solicitous but not overly eager.

They know the menu well, and offer suggestions or describe a particular dish for you, if you're open to that.

TREASURES/ p.C5

SPLENDID Salpicado

PASTA PERFECT. Fettuccini Carbonara with smoked ham and wild mushrooms in a cream sauce

CRISP Chicken Caesar Salad

FOREST House owners Ari, Racquel and Alvin Verzosa

Treasures . . .

(From page C4)

The crowd here is AB and prices are on the higher end. Lunch or dinner for a family of four composed of a drink, a salad or soup, main course and desert cost P300 to P400 per head. But every peso is well spent at the Forest House. Returnees have been keeping the Verzosas busy since they opened in early April.

Forest House, located on Loakan Road, Baguio City, is open daily from 7-11a.m.

Email the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

COFFEE, TEA OR... Forest House's coffee and tea bar

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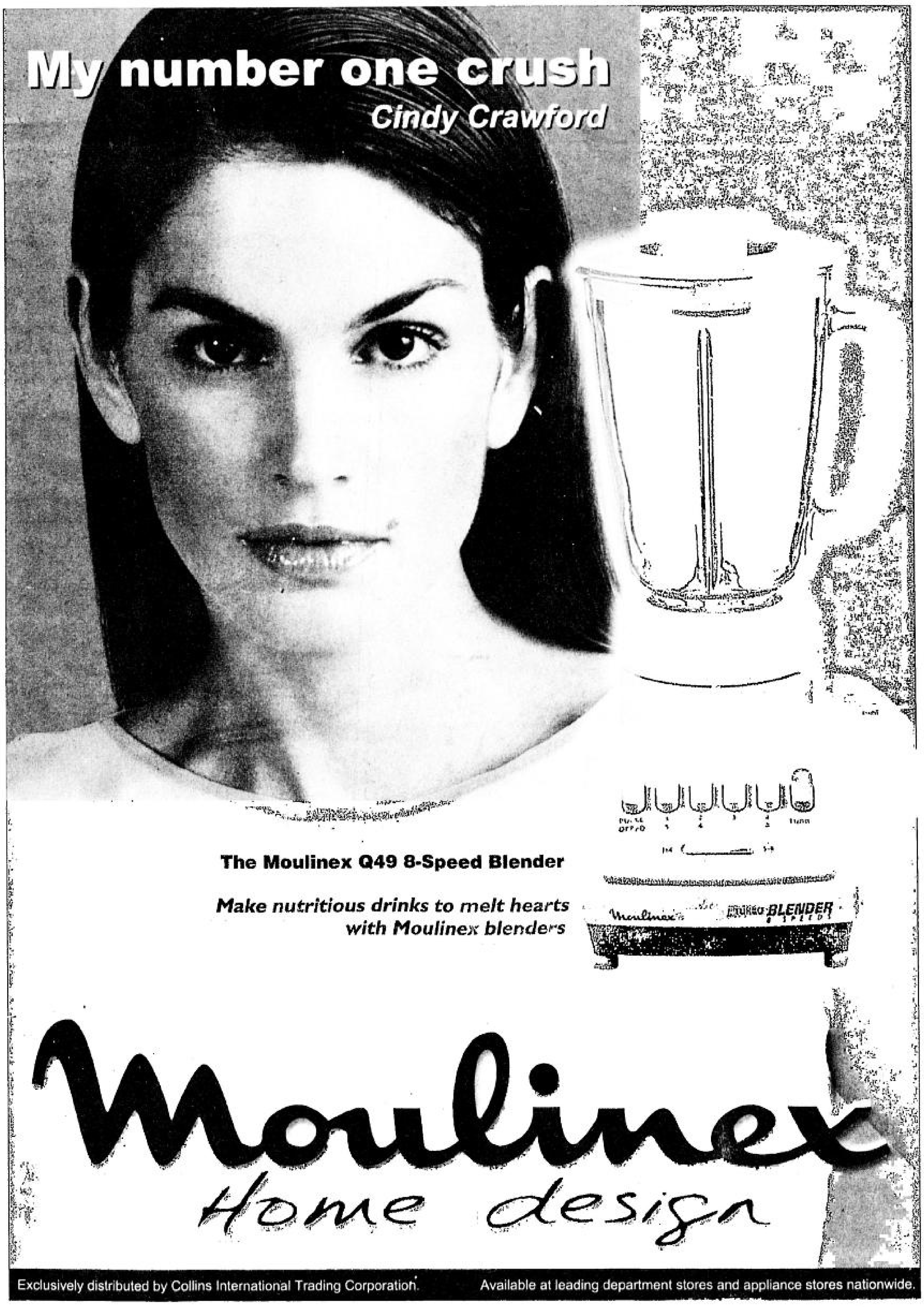
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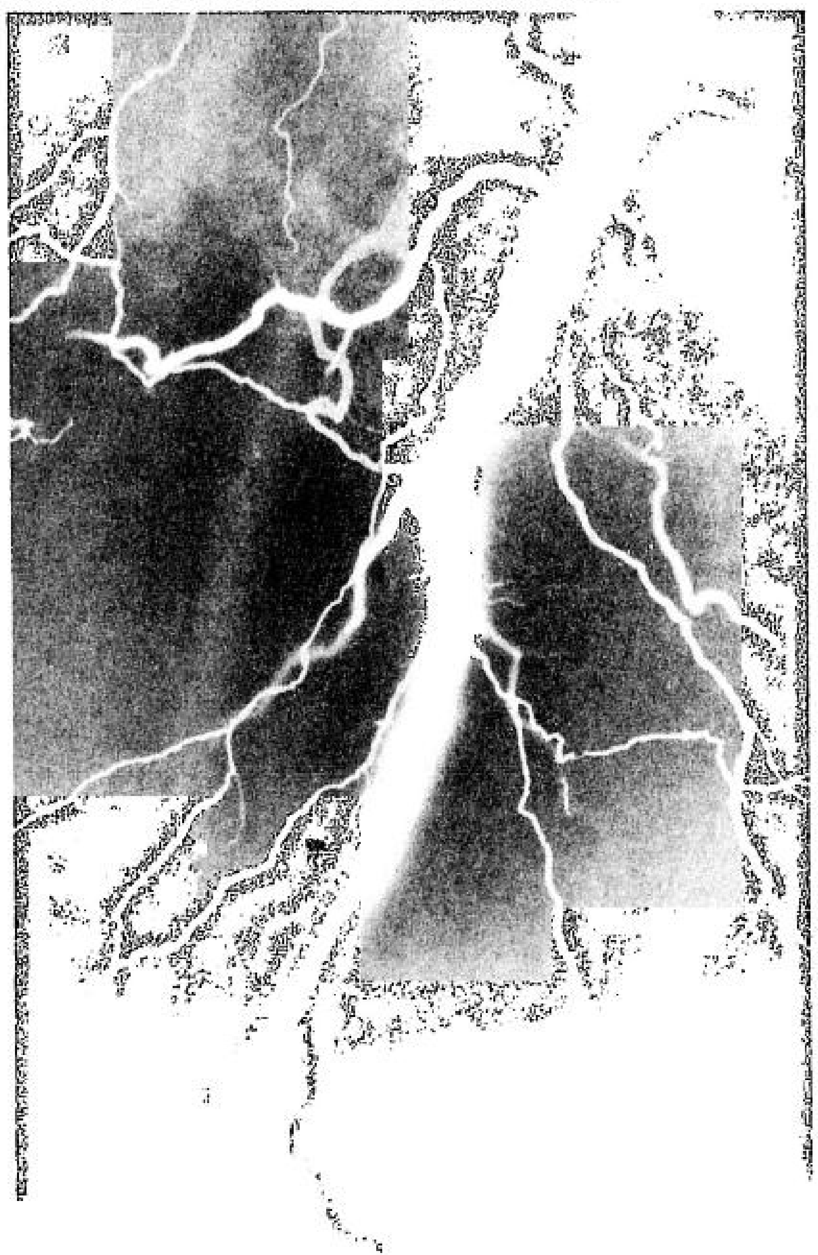
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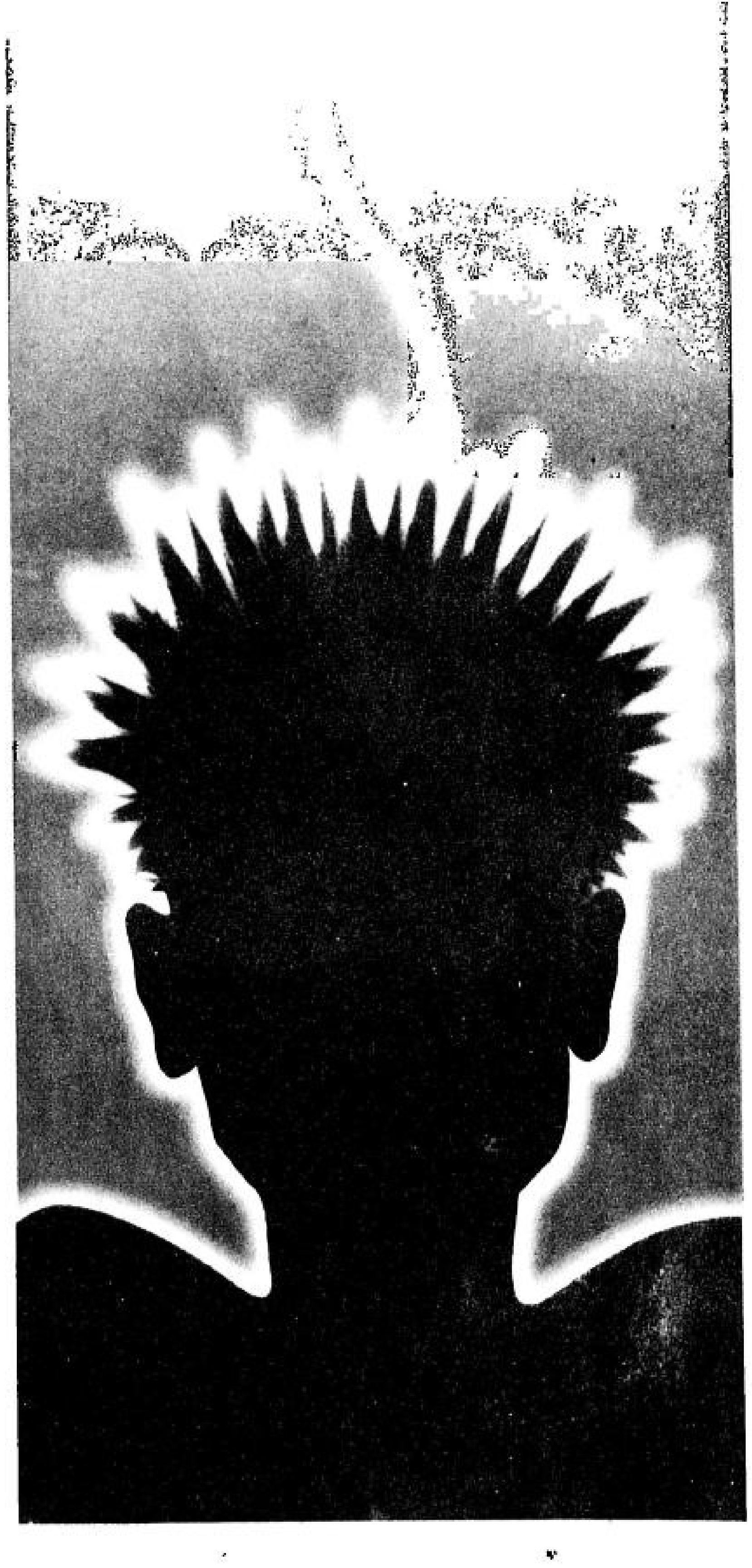

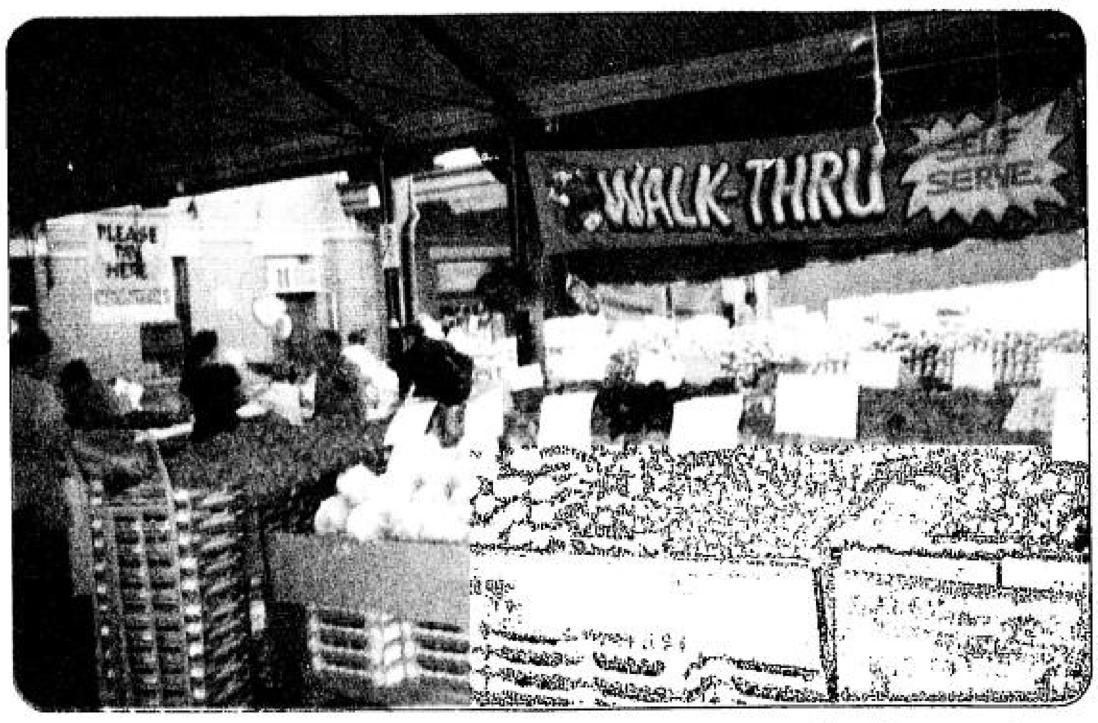

FRESH as the day they were picked, fruits and vegetables are sold self-serve style.

The royal market

(From page C1)

whether from fresh water or the ocean. But the most impressive is the Dairy Produce area with its 38 delicatessens that stock everything your appetite could crave for, from caviar to pate, pastrami to sausages, lollies to nuts, handmade chocolates to European pastries.

You can buy cheese from any country in the united nations of dairy producers—French, Swiss, Greek, Aussie, name it, they've got it, in varying degrees of rancidity, depending on vintage, like wine.

The assortment of delis in Queen Vic give you an idea of what kinds of people live in Melbourne. Exotic fruits and vegetables, some of which you will see for the first and only time here. Sandwiches with meats and toppings that you haven't savored before and you're likely never to again. Anything edible that you won't find your friendly neighborhood supermarket.

If you cross over to the open stands, Lord have mercy on you. Fresh flowers, indoor plants, fashion accessories, household needs, CDs and cassettes, gift items, pet supplies—this is just skimming the surface.

Stallholders have all kinds of tricks to attract your attention or sustain it so you end up paying their price. But Pinoy shoppers win most of the time.

What else to do

If you end up not buying anything, you ought to be canonized. But it's guaranteed you're going to want to taste the food. You can buy from the shops in the food court and eat your food outside while watching street performers around the market.

A regular feature of markets in Australia is the cooking school. It makes sense because a market is a source of fresh ingredients that attracts chefs, gourmets, gourmands, restaurateurs, culinary majors and ordinary people who have to cook to survive. The Chef Kitchen Queen Victoria Market Cooking School has a variety of courses, class times and session prices.

On Wednesday evenings every summer, from Nov. 29 to Jan. 31 (yes, summer because Down Under the seasons are the opposite of American seasons), artists and crafters peddle their works, tarot and crystal ball readers set up shop to tell fortunes, and vendors of sundry things from all over the world make a quick sale when the Queen Vic turns into the Gaslight Night Market. Needless to say, there's food galore and bottles of wine to boot. Parties have been held at the night market. All kinds of performers and bands show up for those to whom a camel ride is not enough entertainment.

If you're really into markets, you might enjoy the Heritage Tour of Queen Vic to gain some insight into the market's soul. For Aussie $16.50, the tour leaves at 10:30 a.m. and serves brunch. But if your particular interest is food, get there at 10 a.m. and join the Foodies Dream Tour, which promises samplings of food, an introduction to the market's large selections of food and tips on how to choose quality food—all for only A$22. You can't get into any tour unless you pre-book. Oh, and there are no tours on Sundays because, well, even God rested on Sunday.

How to get there? Qantas flies to Melbourne thrice a week. Then, you can get to the Queen Victoria Market by private car, and you won't have to worry about parking because there's ample space at the southern end of the market site. Or you can take the tram, which runs along Victoria, Peel and Elizabeth streets, or the train on the underground loop, which stops at Flagstaff and Melbourne Central stations.

The market is closed on Mondays and Wednesday. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, it is open 6 a.m.-2 p.m., and Sundays, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

For information on market activities and bookings for tours or cooking classes, call (03) 9320-5822.

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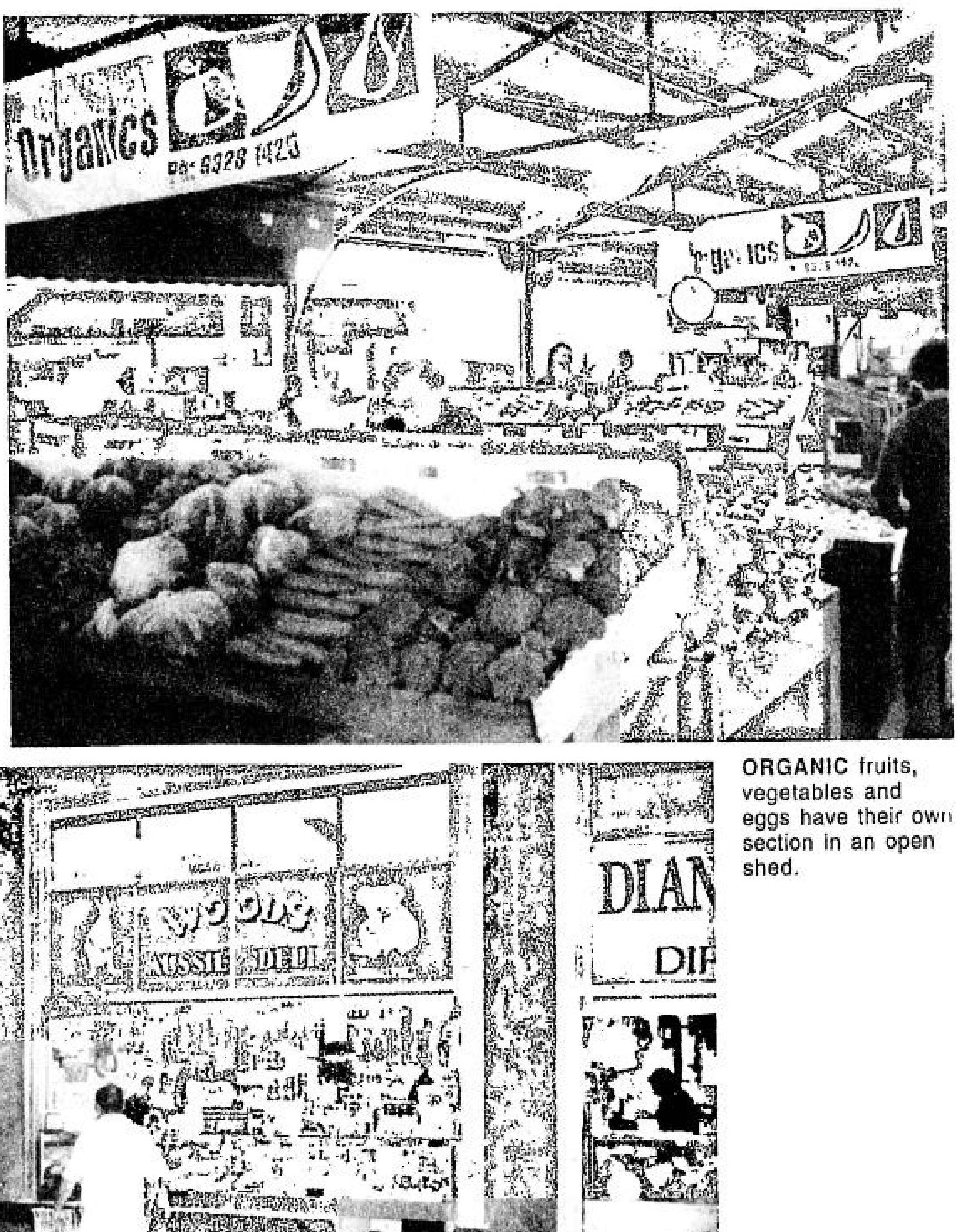
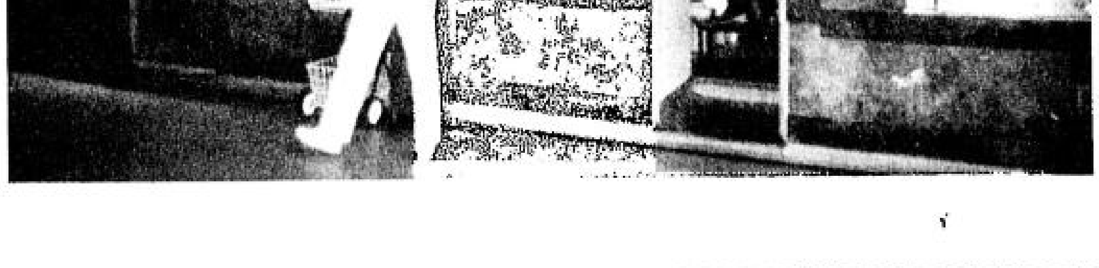
Whether you're a blue-blooded shopper or just an itinerant gawker, the Queen Victoria Market in Melbourne has flavors and surprises to charm you



ORGANIC fruits, vegetables and eggs have their own section in an open shed.

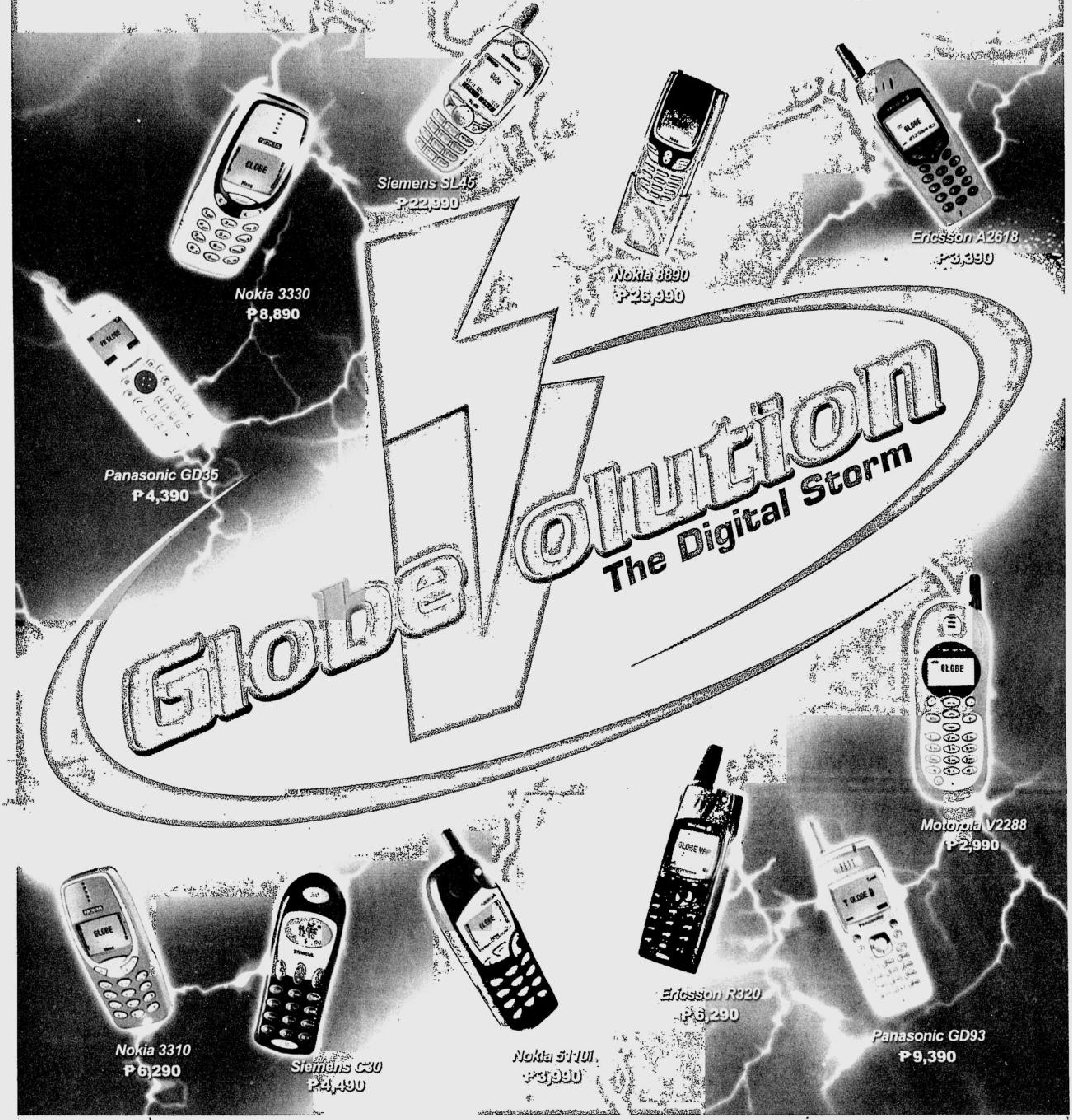
THE DELI
BUTTER STALL
Polish Deli

DELICATESSENS like this Polish shop hang mouth-watering processed meat and display blocks of cheese and cans of butter.



AUSSIES have their own delis, too.

The cellular madness strikes again!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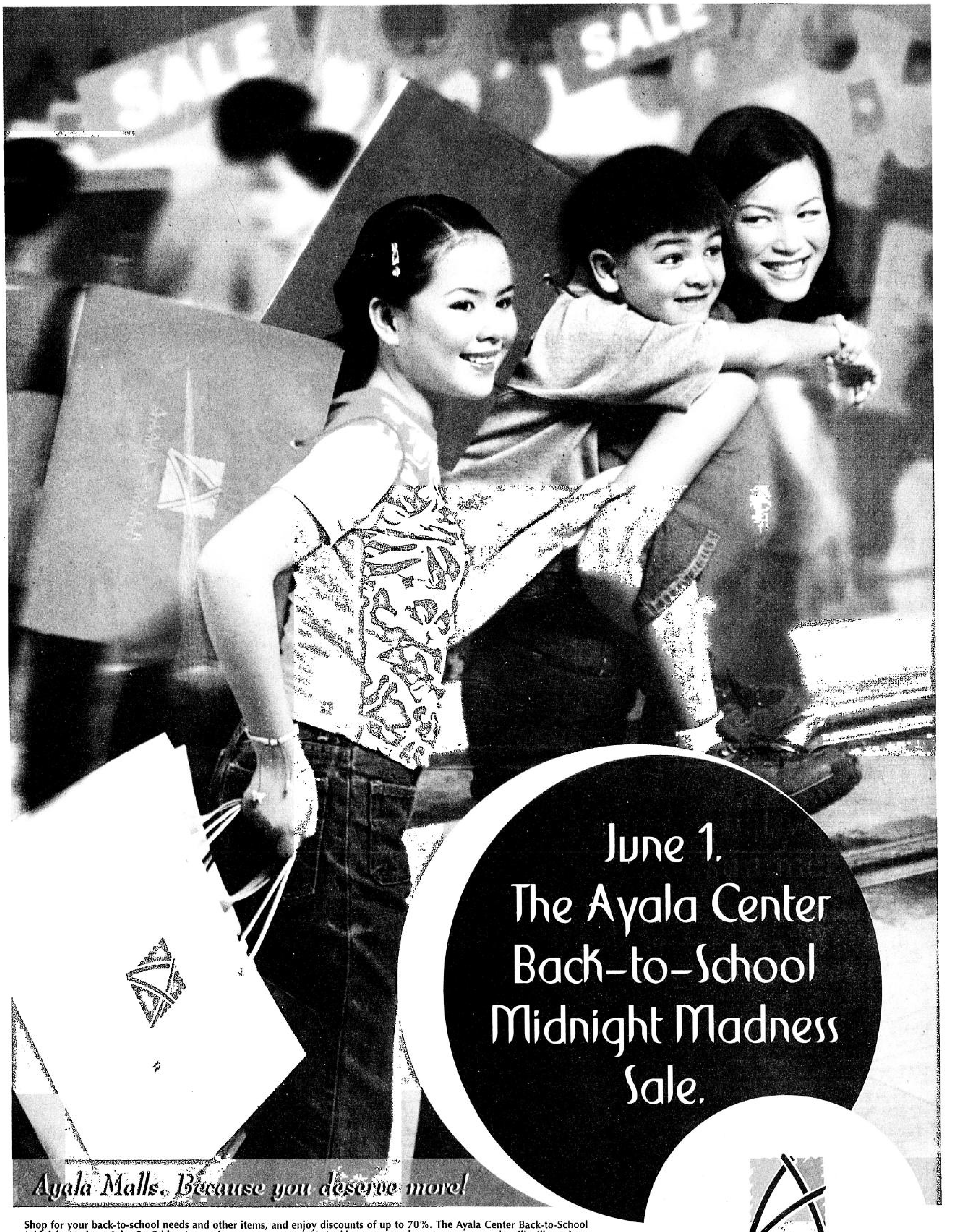
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ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES. Tuna Alfalfa Sandwich Roll

New ways of snacking in the Kitchen

Who says you can't have nouvelle cuisine at 'merienda' time? Choices range from pasta with *tuyo* flakes to *suman* with mango in coconut milk to *palitaw* topped with toasted *pinipig*

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Betoy Johnson

KNOWN for its sleek, simple interiors and nouvelle cuisine, Kitchen continues to pack them in during the lunch and dinner hours, both at its Greenbelt and SM Megamall branches. It is, however, a little known fact that Kitchen is an ideal place to go to for a favorite Filipino pastime—*merienda*.

Born out of college buddies Ricco Ocampo's and Rikki Dee's long-standing love affair with food, Kitchen offers an array of healthy entrées (everything here is fresh and cooked in olive oil) to choose from—sandwiches, salads and pastas—paired off with a

NEW WAYS/ p. D2

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New ways of snacking in the Kitchen

RIKKI Dee

(From page D1)

refreshing, cool drink or a steaming cup of coffee.

Kitchen is quieter in the afternoons and makes for an ideal place to hang out with a friend or to cozy up in a corner with a favorite book. You can have the Sink or Swim Salad, which is basically seared tuna on lettuce and alfalfa sprouts, swimming in sesame soy dressing. With a little wasabi cream to dip the tuna in, it is absolutely delicious.

Or you can try the sun-dried linguine topped with pesto and tuyo flakes. It is just perfect and, on a rainy afternoon, satisfies a momentary craving for *tuyo*. Meals can be paired with a really cool Sweet Serenade—nope, not a song, but *pandan* juice with honey and mint—or the Main Squeeze, which is, before you get any ideas, honest-to-goodness pomelo juice with crushed ice.

THREE kinds of pasta

SINK OR SWIM. Seared tuna on lettuce and alfalfa sprout

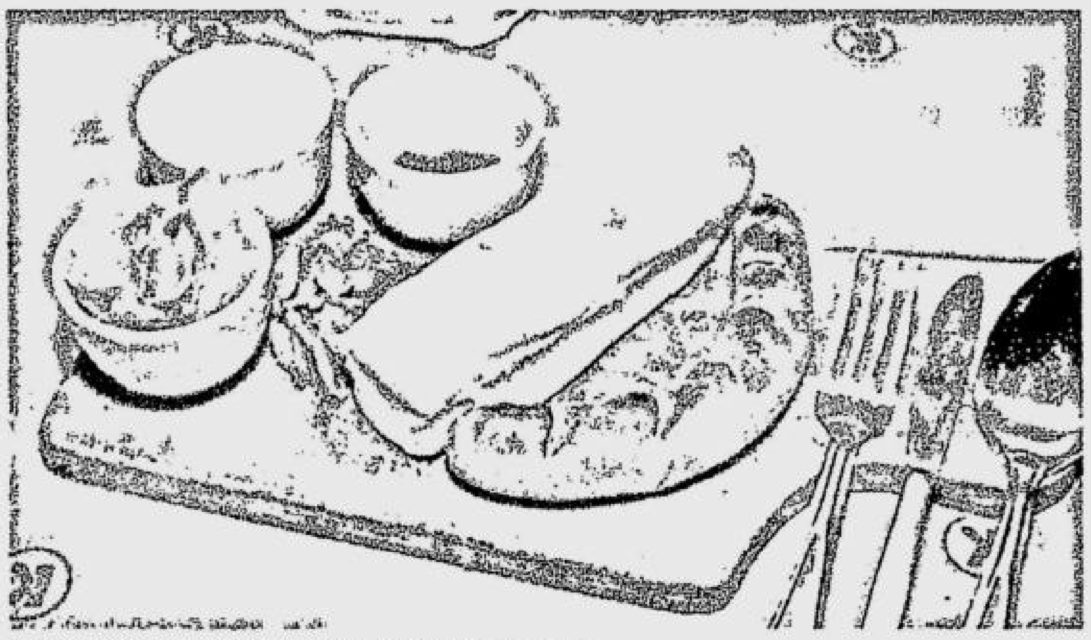
If *merienda* means sweets to you, Kitchen is the place to go. The Ice Queen is a strawberry refrigerator cake with strawberry butter filling and boiled meringue icing. For something more native, try A Sticky Situation which is sticky rice with mango, coconut milk, sweet monggo and thick coconut milk or Wake-up Call which is your humble *palitaw* topped with coffee ice cream and toasted *pinipig*. There is a wide choice of teas and coffees to match the dessert—brewed, decaf, espresso or cappuccino for coffee and chamomile, jasmine, Japanese or peppermint for tea.

A new addition in mid-June is a deli counter to make it possible for Kitchen habitues to bring home a little of their favorites such as pesto, chili sauce, *tuyo* flake, garlic chips, stewed tomatoes and even cakes. Itching to get a bottle of wasabi cream to relish in the privacy of your home? They'll have that on sale, too.

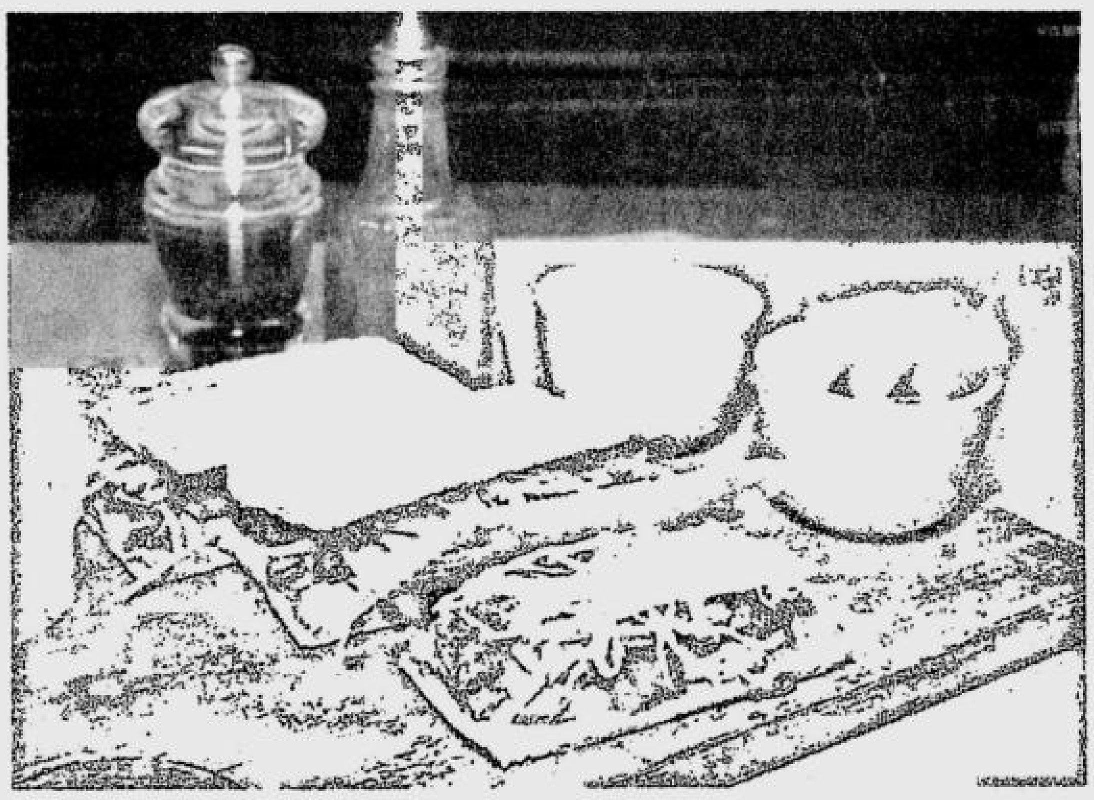
So when you get the craving for a midafternoon snack, or simply quiet time spent with a friend, save the *ensaimada*, hop on to the Kitchen and partake of a no-frills, healthy *merienda* in style.

Kitchen is at Greenbelt Mall in Makati and the Megastrip, Megamall, Ortigas Center.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

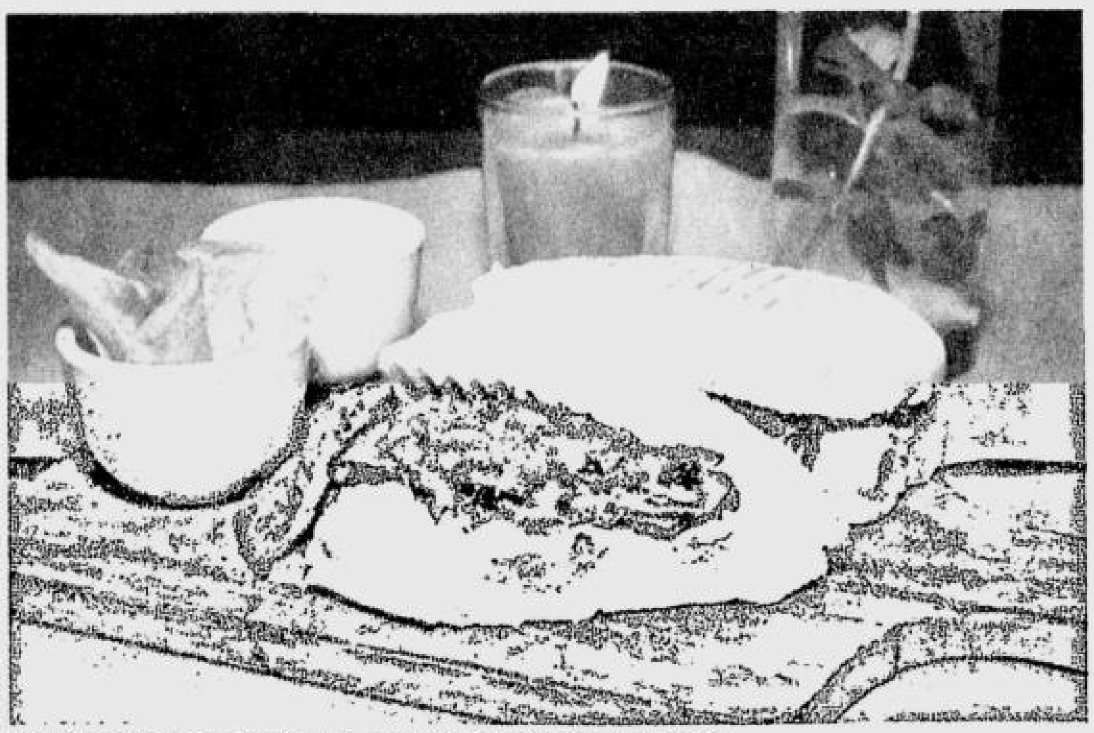


LONG STORY. Grilled Schublig with steamed tomato

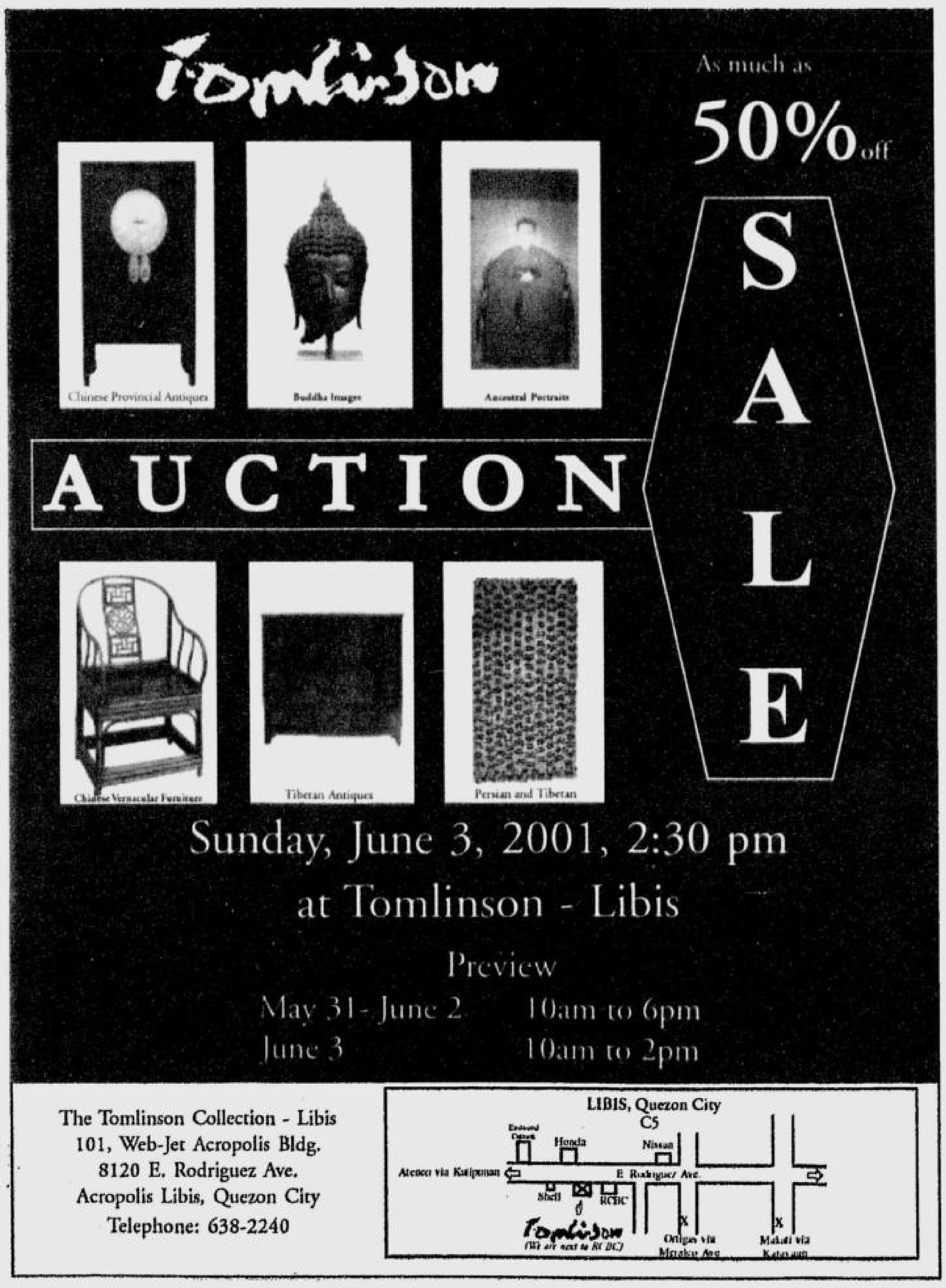


A GOOD CATCH. Sardine sandwiches

DRINKS. Main Squeeze, Real Fruity and Sweet Serenade



QUACK DOCTOR. Fried *adobo* duck flakes with grilled eggplant



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THE KIDS with chef-restaurateur-columnist Sandy Daza

I know what you did last summer

(From page D8)

hamburgers; DJ did pizza; Frances did pasta, etc. Each had to take his ingredients from the larder, weigh them on professional kitchen scales (while consulting the recipes they had taken down during classes), put everything in separate dishes on trays on the desks, then sit down and prepare the dishes.

DJ was delayed by the fact that the anchovies he had asked his sister to bring had not arrived. I asked idly if *tuyo* in olive oil could do in a pinch, even though it had a different flavor. Of course, Ed said, as he whirled the *tuyo* in a food processor, added olive oil, and voila, anchovies! Clever Franz, however, saw in the garbage the decorative cover of the *tuyo* bottle, and guessed immediately what had happened. It was also Franz who, having witnessed the tears Marc was shedding as he chopped onions, brought out his swimming goggles, and exclaimed: "Aha, onions, you can't reach me!"

Frances was a neat, careful chef, who would not give away any of her ingredients, because she had exactly the amounts she needed. Her tables were neat, orderly and efficient. "Are you going to become a chef?" I asked her. "No!" she answered. "A lawyer." I loved watching the male and female ways of assembling a pizza. Frances did a neat, pretty one; Franz hurled his sardines on his pizza; March, finding bacon and ham left over, ate them.

Finally all the dishes-to-be-cooked were ranged on the counter, and when the children's families arrived, the food was cooked (and later was served at the reception), Chef Ed introduced each one, the kids received their certificates, and graduated.

What had been a bunch of kids had become a gang of friends. "They are all my best friends," Marc said. What better fruit could there be from a summer vacation? Skills for life, experience to remember, tastes and savors, fun and friendship. All in one brief summertime.

Celebration of Sicilian cuisine at The Pen

IN THE TRADITION of celebrating fine cuisine from all over the world, The Peninsula Manila invites you to take a glimpse into the multifaceted world of Italian cooking as they bring you a celebration of Sicilian cuisine with Sicilian-born chef Giuseppe Genco at Mi Piace, beginning today, with "Festivale di Cucina Siciliana."

Chef Genco will be introducing the flavors of his island home with a menu offering traditional fare like Sardi a Beccaficu (sardines filled with bread crumb, parsley, almond, cheese and garlic), Suppa alla Marretimu (seafood soup with garlic bruschetta), Penne alla Paolina (penne with cauliflower, onions, basil, pine nuts and raisin sauce), Piazza Culi Cozzi (Mozzarella, tomato, garlic and mussels), Rarignata Misto di Pesci (mixed grilled seafood marinated with lime olive oil, mint and garlic) Invultinu a Palermitana (beef roulade with cheese, almond, raisin and thyme) and Cannoli (*cannoli* filled with ricotta cheese and chocolate chips).

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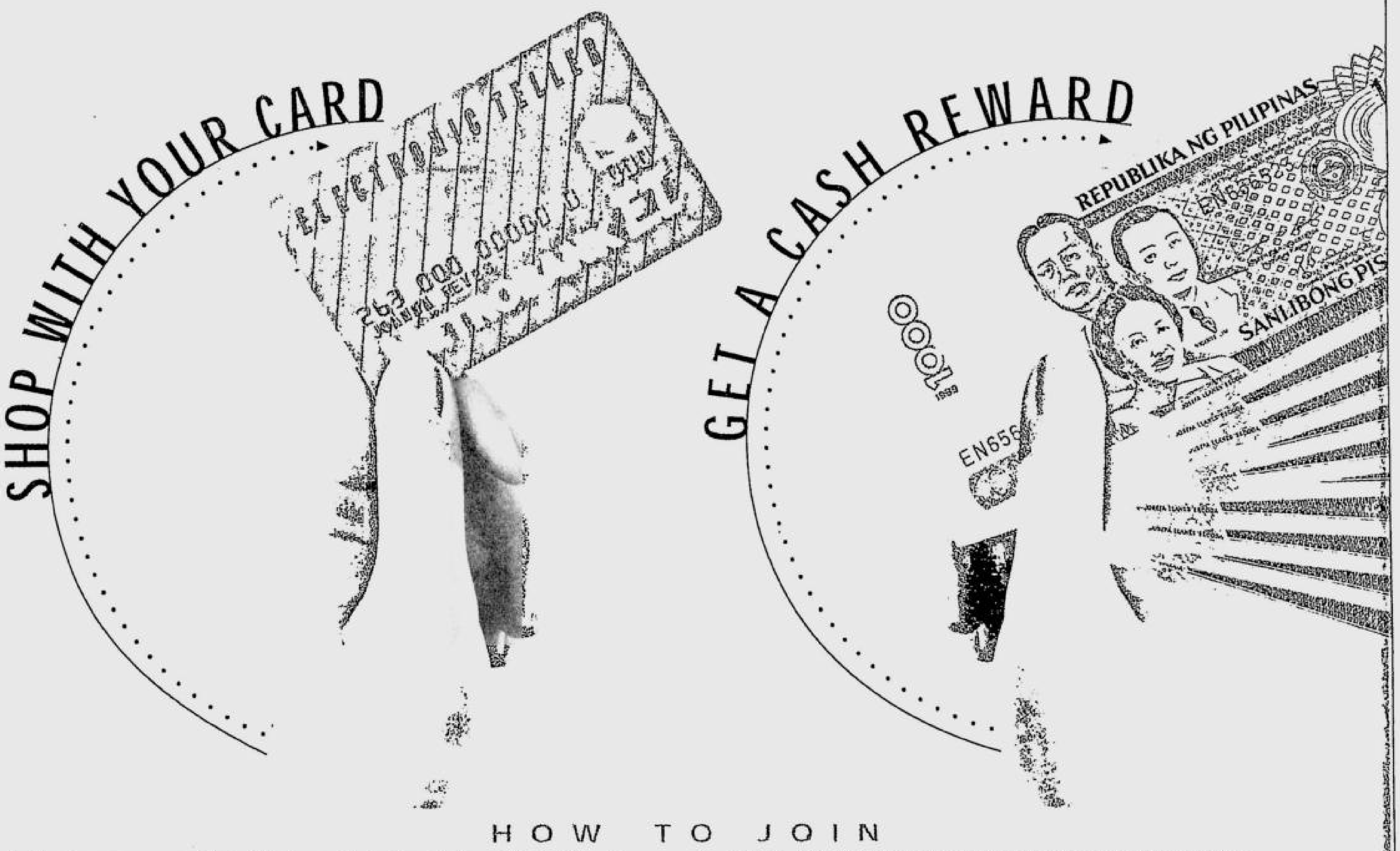

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BO NUONG or Vietnamese Grilled Beef

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Flavors of the Orient

When you travel to other countries, you don't only remember the sights but the food as well, and that's the reason behind the multicultural menu at this diner

By Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Eugene Lara

IT was Wednesday noon at O Café, located at the second level of Robinsons Galleria in Pasig City. At one table, a couple nibbled on Chagio, Ho Chi Minh crispy spring rolls. At another table to our right, a middle-aged executive scarfed down a bowlful of Wonton Mein, Cantonese broth with stuffed wanton and noodles. Beside him were well-dressed ladies picking at Samosa, Singapore's vegetarian savories delicately wrapped and served with chutney, and Calamari, chili crusted squid served with Thai tamarind sauce. At the table to our left, two yuppies munched on Pappadum, spicy crisp Indian dal wafer served with tamarind dip, and Sago Gula Melaka, Malaysian pudding of *sago*, coconut milk and palm sugar.

These days, trendy people shun both the simple bistro around the corner and the high-priced temples of haute cuisine. Instead, many of them eat flashy foreign food. Because people travel more nowadays, they have developed a taste for different cuisines.

Since it opened in March, the 60-seater O Café has been offering a polyglot menu. Thailand, Vietnam, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, India—name it, if it's Asian they have dishes from it. "We chose to have a diverse multicultural menu because when we eat we usually look for different cuisines. O Café is where diners can enjoy all these choices," says Wilma Santos-Huang, its general manager.

The diner seeks to be "a culinary travel guide" by presenting diverse Southeast Oriental foods, with emphasis on freshness and flavor. "Rather than calling it an Asian house, we named it O Café. We want it to be a bit nostalgic and offer what's only traditional when-it-comes-to-cuisine."

CHAGIO or Vietnamese Spring Rolls

WALNUT Prawns, a dish from China

The restaurant's O Plates offer mouth-watering dishes such as Goi Cuon (Vietnam's fresh summer rolls served with peanut sauce), Tod Mun Pla (Bangkok's spicy fish cake with pickled cucumber), Pandan Ribs (Singapore's pork ribs wrapped in *pandan* leaves), Crispy Chicken served with lime dipping sauce, Walnut Prawns with glazed walnuts, and Steamed Fish (fillet of fish with black beans and garlic). Also served are O Rice Plates, which contain samplings of its main dishes.

Salads include Pomelo Jicama (fresh pomelo, candied walnuts and cooling herb), Goi Du Du (shredded green papaya with prawns, basil and spicy citrus dressing) and Orient Chicken (grilled chicken, mixed greens and wonton strips tossed with Oriental light dressing).

There's also soups, noodles, snacks of Kropeck and Pappadum, the Vietnamese Bahn Mi sandwich of beef, pork and chicken, side orders of Hakka eggplant, Sichuan string beans, Ong Choi kangkong and Mapo Tofu.

Desserts include Coco Creme Caramel, Khao Mamuang (mangoes with sticky rice), Genghis Khan (crispy layers filled with cream and fresh fruit), Bur Chacha (Singapore's *halo-halo* of yam, banana, tapioca over crushed ice and *pinipig* served with coconut milk), Jelly Tapioca, Sorbet and Fresh Fruits.

East meets West

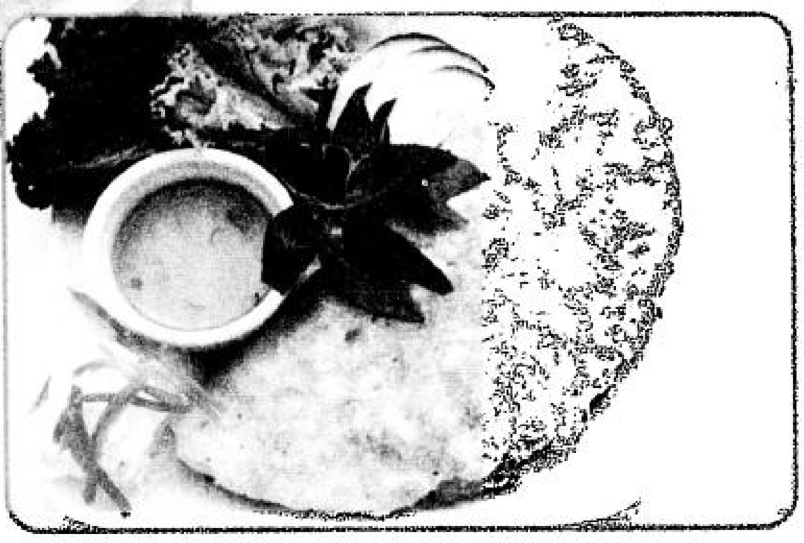
O Café's Southeast Asian cuisine, Huang says, is not fusion but the diner's look is. "The appearance is a bit West: modern, clean and streamlined while its furnishings are Oriental-inspired." The restaurant's stools are the traditional seats in China. Chairs and tables from Italy give the "squat look." Its logo "O" means good luck in feng shui so round paper lanterns adorn the café. Black-and-white photos portraying market scenes in Southeast Asia decorate a wall.

Although Huang consults an Oriental-American gourmet, most of O Café's recipes have come from the families of Huang and Al Tambunting, the diner's vice president. These are recipes that have been guarded like a saint's relic since colonial times.

Huang believes that the olfactory sense is precise, swift and powerful and it bores into our memory with persistent tenacity. Like when you sip Vietnamese Iced Coffee or Thai Iced Tea, their temptation is not born of the taste, which leaves smoky dregs in memory but in the intense and mysterious fragrance of remote forests. "It's like remembering a person for his cologne. And sometimes when we evoke the aroma of a mouth-watering dish, nostalgia and pleasure move us to tears," Huang says.

Open from 10 a.m.-9 p.m. on Monday-Thursday, and 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Friday-Sunday, O Café will open outlets at Robinsons Place Manila and Rockwell in July.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



BAHN Xeo is a Vietnamese crepe

O CAFÉ features cuisine from the Southeast Asia

FUN IN A LUNCHBOX

SCHOOL bells are once again set to ring. And as early as now, parents and kids are hitting the malls to get a fresh supply of school items. One must-have this coming school year is Jollibee's Nickelodeon Lunchbox. For every P75 food purchase, customers can get the Nickelodeon Lunchbox for only P125 (tax inclusive). Lunchtime will never be this fun as kids can enjoy drinking their juice from the Nickelodeon Lunchbox Hey Arnold! Flask and Cup, which is shaped like a rocket ship. Kids can also eat their *baon* from the Wild Thornberrys Food Keeper, using the Rugrats Spoon and Fork. Jollibee's Nickelodeon Lunchbox is a colorful mix of blue, orange, yellow and green. The fun immediately begins as soon as kids slide open the lunchbox with the Nickelodeon logo lock. Promo runs until June 6.

Reggie Aspiras holds June classes at Shangri-La Plaza

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts located at the Bon Apetit, 3/F Shangri-La Plaza, has announced its classes for the month of June. The schedule is as follows:

June 18 and 20: "Cocktails (Spectacular Presentation)"—Mixed Pancake and Blini Platter with Caviar, Salmon, Mixed Cold Cuts, Chutneys and Relishes; Savory Cheesecakes with Mixed Salsa and Toppings; Plates of Bull Fry Oxtail, Wild Mushroom and Bacalo with Mixed Crackers, Mixed Pasta Crisp Cakes with Toppings and Salsa, Assorted Fresh Fruit Glazed with Sweet Wine and Assorted Cold Cuts, Crudites with Dips, Mini Tea Sandwiches, Baked Cheese Platter with Dipping Sauces, Mixed Mousse of Vegetable and Seafood, Baked Oysters with Toppings Petit-Fours, Spiced Fruit Punch Three Kinds.

June 22: "Gourmet Inihaw Rice Toppings"—Flaming Beef Tadyang with Onion and Tofu Rice, Stuffed Inihaw na Pusit with Broccoli Rice and Cherry Tomato Bagoong Salad, Inihaw na Baboy with Sayote Tip Rice, Peanut Pork Barbecue with Atchara Price, Chicken Barbecue with Saffron Seasoned Java Rice and Caramelized Sibuyas Tagalog.

June 23: "Crabs, Crabs, Crabs"—Cream of Mini and Crab Soup, Than Long Style Crab with Garlic and Herb Pasta, Stuffed Crab Claws, Pompano and Crab En Papillote, Steamed Crabs Done in Three Ways, With Curry Sauce, Black Beans and Mantecado.

June 25: "Lutong Bahay 3—Gourmet Filipino"—Ukoy, Wax Paper Lumpia, Sintul Bulalo, Sinalaban na Baka, Garlic Chicken Carajay, My Version of Turon.

June 27 and 29: "My Thai 1-2"—My Mixed Tom Yum, Fried Tofu with Cilantro Peanut Sauce, Fresh Thai Shrimp and Noodle Roll, Fried Fish Cake with Kaffir Lime Curry, Noodle Toppings, Fish Curry and Thai Barbecue Pork, Rice Toppings, Delicious Thai Beef Stew, Stir-fried Garlic Basil Chickens Grilled Shrimp with Squash Flowers and Sweet Tamarind Sauce, Fried Pompano with Two Sauces, Tamarind and Shallot Served with Budoo Nam with Rice and Vegetables, My Version of Sticky Rice with Mixed Toppings.

June 30: "Seafood Feast"—Warm Seafood Salad, Seafood Wellington, Stuffed Sea Bass, Mixed Seafood and Sweet Corn Fondue, Homemade Seafood Ravioli, Arugula Stuffed Salmons and Seafood Tamales.

Call 633-5162, 634-7464, local 214 or fax 928-9296.

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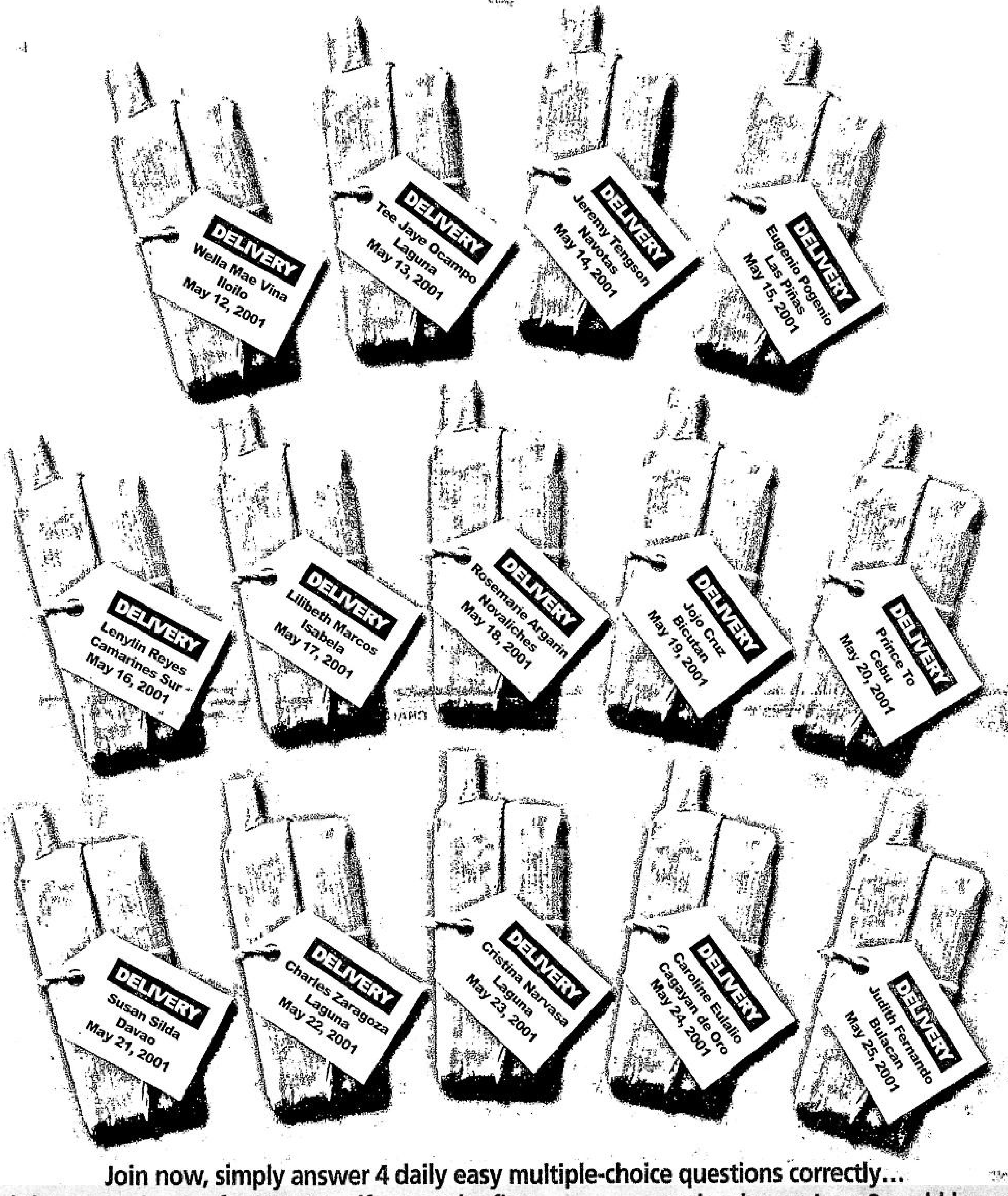
DELIVERY
Wella Mae Vina
Iloilo
May 12, 2001
DELIVERY
Tee Jaye Ocampo
Laguna
May 13, 2001
DELIVERY
Jeremy Tengson
Navotas
May 14, 2001
DELIVERY
Eugenio Pogenio
Las Piñas
May 15, 2001
DELIVERY
Lenylin Reyes
Camarines Sur
May 16, 2001
DELIVERY
Lilibeth Marcos
Isabela
May 17, 2001
DELIVERY
Rosemarie Argarin
Novaliches
May 18, 2001
DELIVERY
Jojo Cruz
Bicutan
May 19, 2001
DELIVERY
Prince To
Cebu
May 20, 2001
DELIVERY
Susan Silda
Davao
May 21, 2001
DELIVERY
Charles Zaragoza
Laguna
May 22, 2001
DELIVERY
Cristina Narvasa
Laguna
May 23, 2001
DELIVERY
Caroline Eulalio
Cagayan de Oro
May 24, 2001
DELIVERY
Judith Fernando
Bulacan
May 25, 2001

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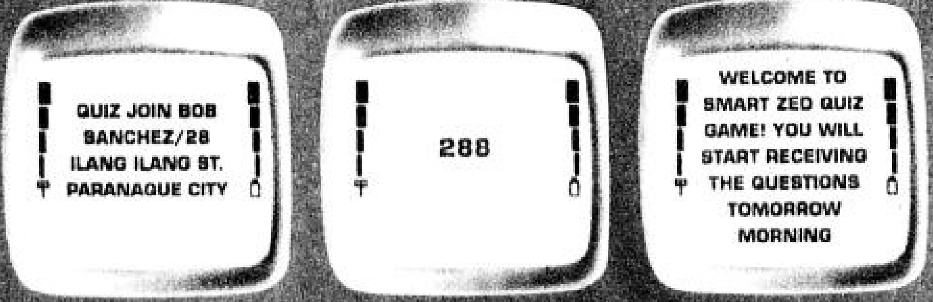
See posters and flyers for more details.

How to Join:



QUIZ JOIN BOB SANCHEZ/28 ILANG ILANG ST. PARANAQUE CITY

Type in QUIZ JOIN <name>/<address>

288

Send text to 288.

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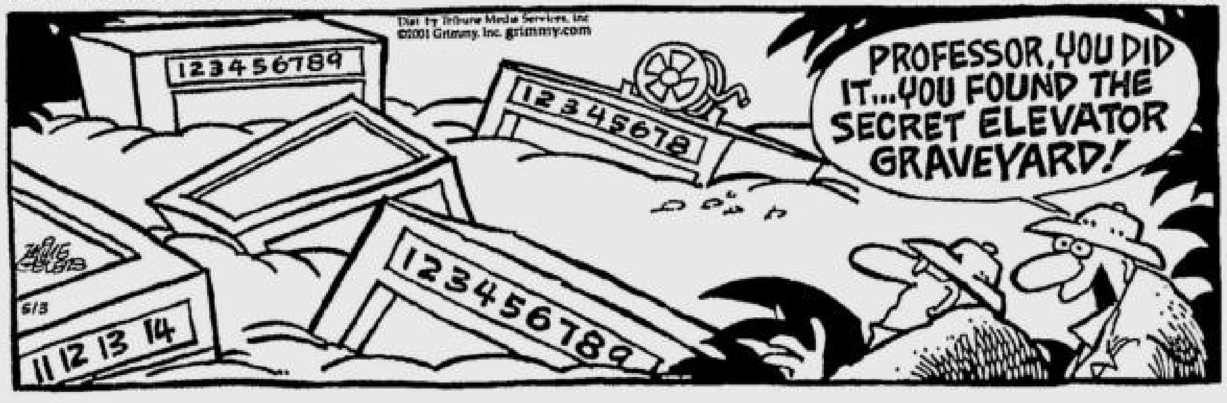
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS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123456789
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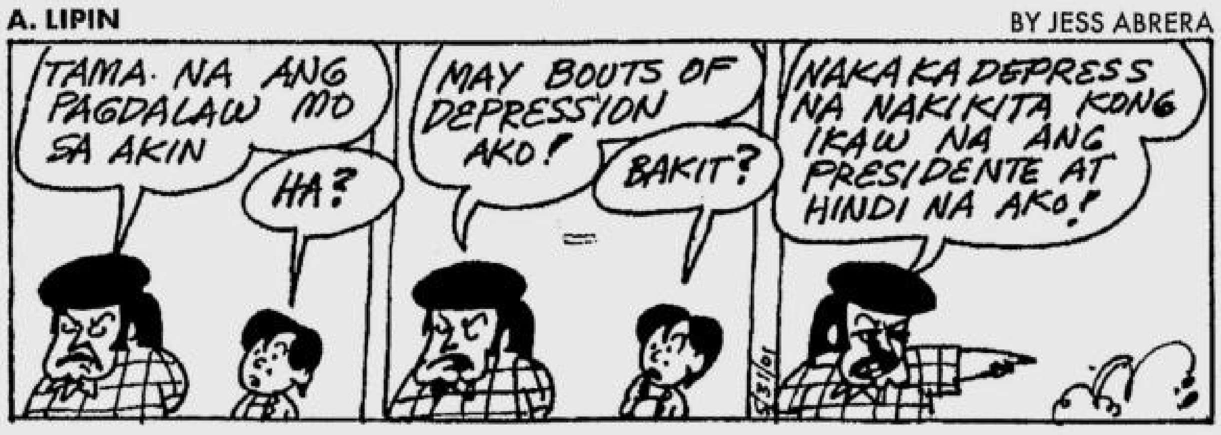
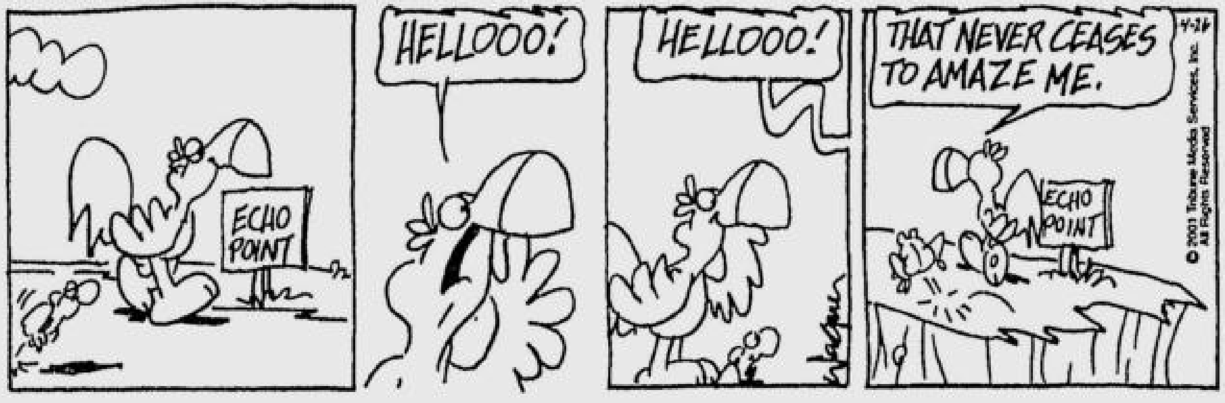
11 12 13 14
5/13
PROFESSOR, YOU DID IT...YOU FOUND THE SECRET ELEVATOR GRAVEYARD!

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


TAMA NA ANG PAGDALAW MO SA AKIN
HA?
MAY BOUTS OF DEPRESSION AKO!
BAKIT?
5/31/01
NAKAKADEPRESS NA NAKIKITA KONG IKAW NA ANG PRESIDENTE AT HINDI NA AKO!

ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRED WAGNER


ECHO POINT
HELLOOO!
HELLOOO!
THAT NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME.
ECHO POINT
4-26
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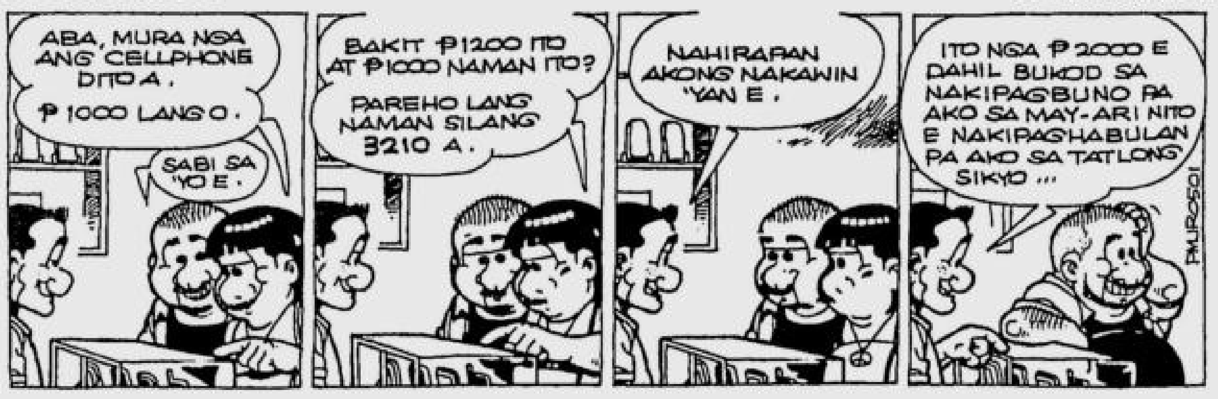
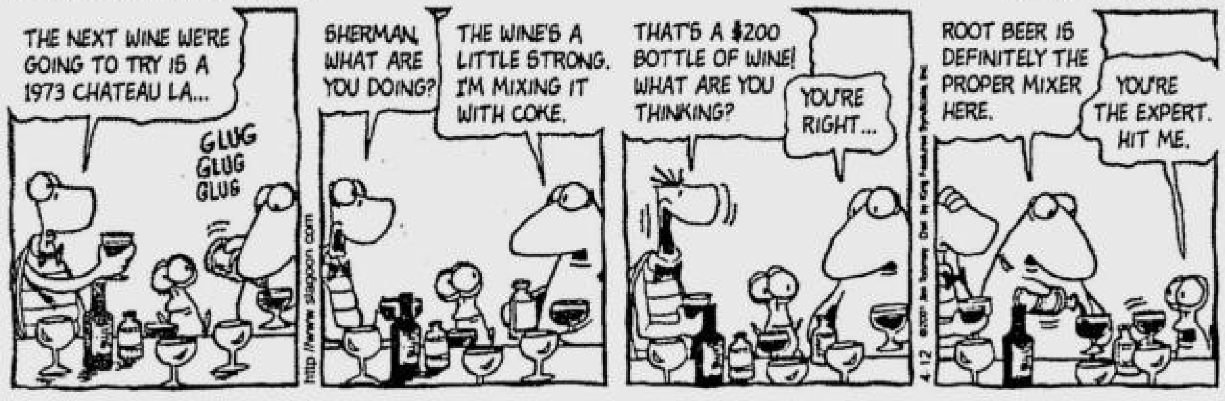
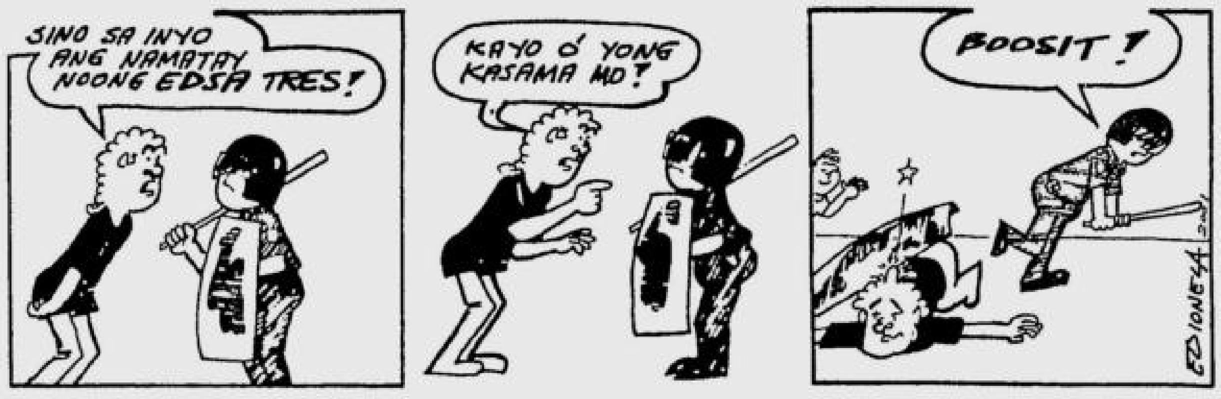
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ABA, MURA NGA ANG CELLPHONE DITO A.
₱ 1000 LANG O.
SABI SA 'YO E.
BAKIT ₱1200 ITO AT ₱1000 NAMAN ITO?
PAREHO LANG NAMAN SILANG 3210 A.
NAHIRAPAN AKONG NAKAWIN 'YAN E.
ITO NGA ₱2000 E DAHIL BUKOD SA NAKIPAGBUNO PA AKO SA MAY-ARI NITO E NAKIPAGHABULAN PA AKO SA TATLONG SIKYO ...
PMJR05'01

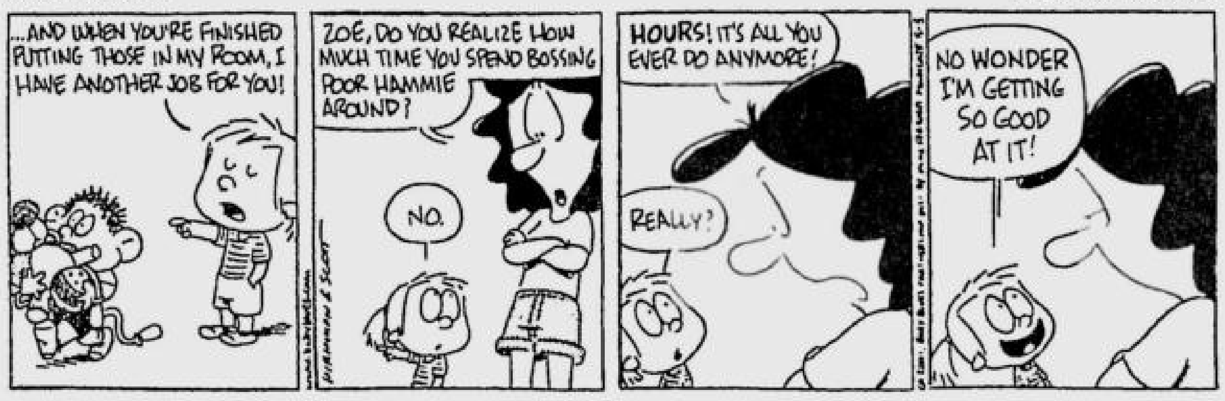
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


THE NEXT WINE WE'RE GOING TO TRY IS A 1973 CHATEAU LA...
GLUG GLUG GLUG
http://www.slagoon.com
SHERMAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THE WINE'S A LITTLE STRONG. I'M MIXING IT WITH COKE.
THAT'S A $200 BOTTLE OF WINE! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
YOU'RE RIGHT...
4-12
ROOT BEER IS DEFINITELY THE PROPER MIXER HERE.
YOU'RE THE EXPERT. HIT ME.

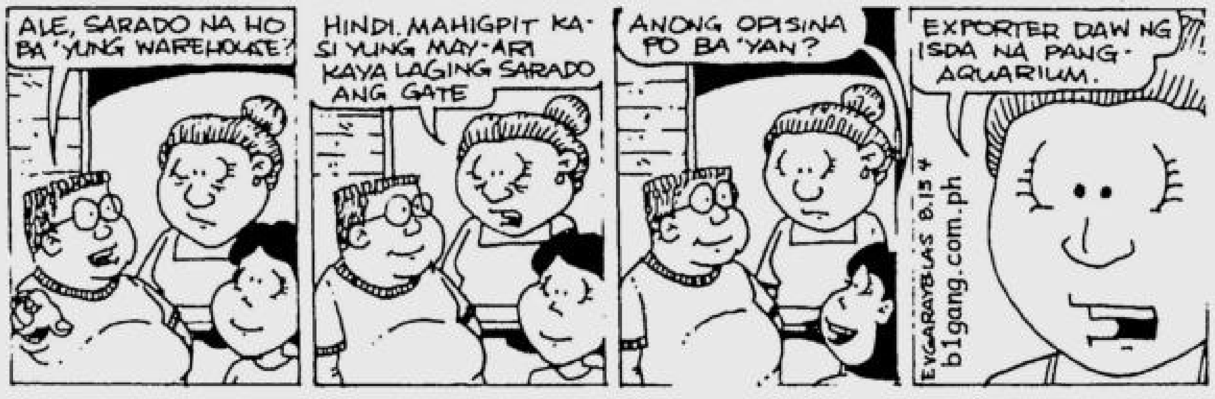
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


SINO SA INYO ANG NAMATAY NOONG EDSA TRES!
KAYO O' YONG KASAMA MO?
BOOSIT!
EDIONELA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


...AND WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED PUTTING THOSE IN MY ROOM, I HAVE ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU!
ZOE, DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH TIME YOU SPEND BOSSING POOR HAMMIE AROUND?
NO.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
HOURS! IT'S ALL YOU EVER DO ANYMORE!
REALLY?
NO WONDER I'M GETTING SO GOOD AT IT!

B1 GANG BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


ALE, SARADO NA HO BA 'YUNG WAREHOUSE?
HINDI. MAHIGPIT KASI YUNG MAY-ARI KAYA LAGING SARADO ANG GATE
ANONG OPISINA PO BA 'YAN?
EXPORTER DAW NG ISDA NA PANG-AQUARIUM.
EYGARAYBIAS 8.13
b1gang.com.ph

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Prince Rainier, Clint Eastwood, Brooke Shields, Tom Berenger, Joe Namath, Don Ameche, Lea Thompson, Chris Elliott

Happy Birthday: As you juggle your way through many pitfalls and challenges this year, you'll look like a wizard. Your ability to make order out of chaos will elicit recognition and praise from those watching on the sidelines. Your no-nonsense approach to the people and situations that mean the most will position you well for the future. You have a strong will and an ingenious way of handling others. Your numbers: 6, 13, 29, 32, 38, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Get down to business. You'll be able to manipulate situations and get your own way by pushing your ideas. Added discipline will enable you to complete some unfinished projects.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Get moving. Take the chance and make personal alterations to enhance your appearance and raise your self-esteem. You've been wavering too long.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't hold your breath. If you think your partner will come crawling back and bend to your needs, think again. Re-evaluate your motives. Maybe it's you who needs to make the changes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will meet potential mates if you get out and start living. Don't be shy. Say what's on your mind and stick to your beliefs rather than assuming the opinions of others.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be in the mood for love. Your desire to lay your emotional cards on the table will determine your personal direction. Now is not the time to hold back.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Watch out for overindulgence, or expect to put on pounds. Get into a regimented routine before it's too late. Moderation will be the key.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Take care of any red tape or legal matters. Financial gains can be made if you are conservative in investments. Don't let friends or relatives make you feel guilty for being busy.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Participation in organizations will lead to romantic encounters. You're able to convince others of your belief in a worthy cause. Your dedication will sway any opposition.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Sexual attractions will be tempting. Your mate will become jealous easily, so you'd better think twice before you decide to get involved. It may be time to move on.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't overspend on entertainment. It is wise to avoid putting too much money or time into fixing your nesting place. Put your cash into a retirement fund that is long-term and safe.

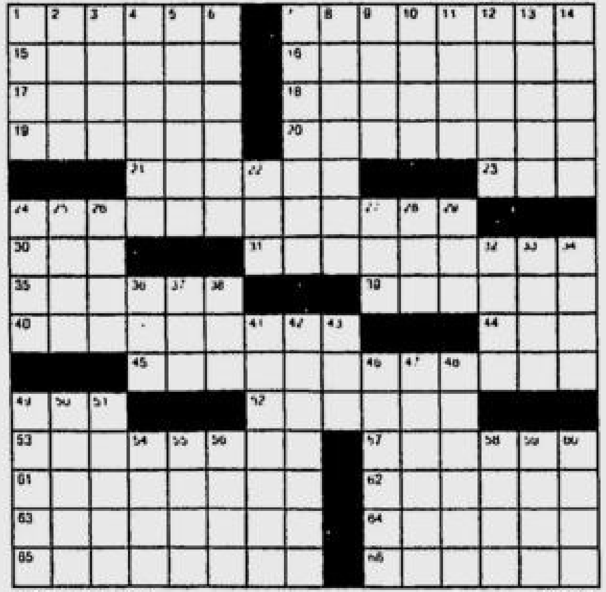
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Opportunities to meet new people will lead to a lucrative business opportunity. You need some adventure in your life. You've been an observer for too long now.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You should be getting out and enjoying life. Expand your interests by signing up for events and courses that draw your attention. Take action and you'll get satisfaction.

Birthday Baby: You have a twinkle in your eye and an intelligent way of approaching your pursuits. You are industrious, creative and well-equipped for any challenge

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60
61 62
63 64
65 66

By Sheryl Scott
Akron, OH

4/14/01

ACROSS
1 Rotating neutron star
7 Vulnerable
15 Without luster
16 Appraise
17 Like guitars and tennis racquets
18 Jazz pianist Oscar
19 So far
20 Waves hitting shores
21 End up on top
23 Balmoral Castle's river
24 Tool for many nuts
30 Corn unit
31 Continuing existence
35 Kansas City team
39 Anne and Liv
40 Found a temporary tenant
44 Swabby's stick
45 Relaxing into position
49 100 square meters
52 Overnight flight
53 Savage
57 Turning points
61 Chesterfield or dolman
62 Gridiron takedown
63 Reduce by 10 percent
64 Relaxing
65 Regarded with respect
66 Took five

DOWN
1 Emily of etiquette
2 As far as
3 Rendered fat
4 Complain peevishly
5 "__ Mame"
6 Acting ruler
7 Tracy's frequent co-star
8 Turned inside out
9 Overdue
10 Entreaty
11 Skulk about
12 Facilitated
13 Mall unit
14 Intuit
22 Have debts
24 Brief time spans
25 Honolulu's island
26 Tot's bed
27 Fanatic
28 "__, the Beloved Country"
29 Linden of "Barney Miller"
32 Verne's captain
33 Toot one's own horn
34 "SportsCenter" stn.
36 RRs on trestles
37 Cost to participate
38 Formed a lap
41 Grooved like muscle
42 Voted in
43 Carried out
46 Drink of the gods
47 Whirl
48 Thaws
49 Domicile
50 Desirable reviews
51 Upright
54 Runny French cheese
55 Summit
56 Wander about
58 Card game for three
59 What __ can I say?
60 Plant starter

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	S	I	S	■	S	P	I	L	L	■	A	W	E	S
D	I	R	E	■	I	O	N	I	A	■	R	O	L	E
U	N	A	C	C	E	P	T	E	D	■	S	N	I	T
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T	W	E	L	V	E	P	L	U	S	O	N	E	■	■
■	■	■	A	I	D	■	■	P	A	Y	■	R	A	P
C	O	B	R	A	■	S	T	E	N	■	A	F	R	O
A	N	A	G	R	A	M	A	N	D	E	Q	U	A	L
T	U	N	E	■	V	O	I	D	■	N	U	L	L	S
S	S	T	■	P	I	T	■	■	F	D	A	■	■	■
■	■	E	L	E	V	E	N	P	L	U	S	T	W	O
C	A	R	A	T	■	■	A	L	A	R	■	H	A	N
A	R	I	D	■	P	A	R	A	M	E	T	E	R	S
N	I	N	E	■	I	R	E	N	E	■	E	T	T	E
T	A	G	S	■	E	A	S	E	S	■	E	A	S	T

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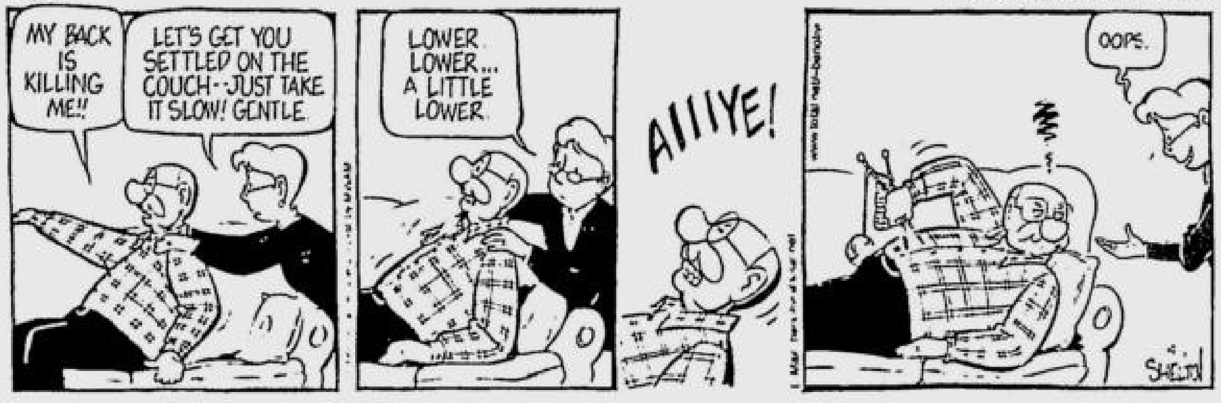
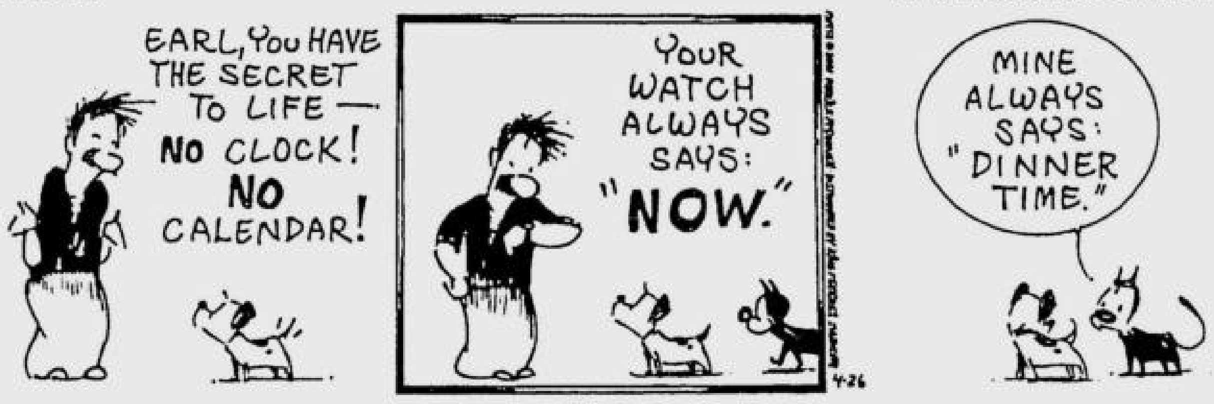
4/14/01

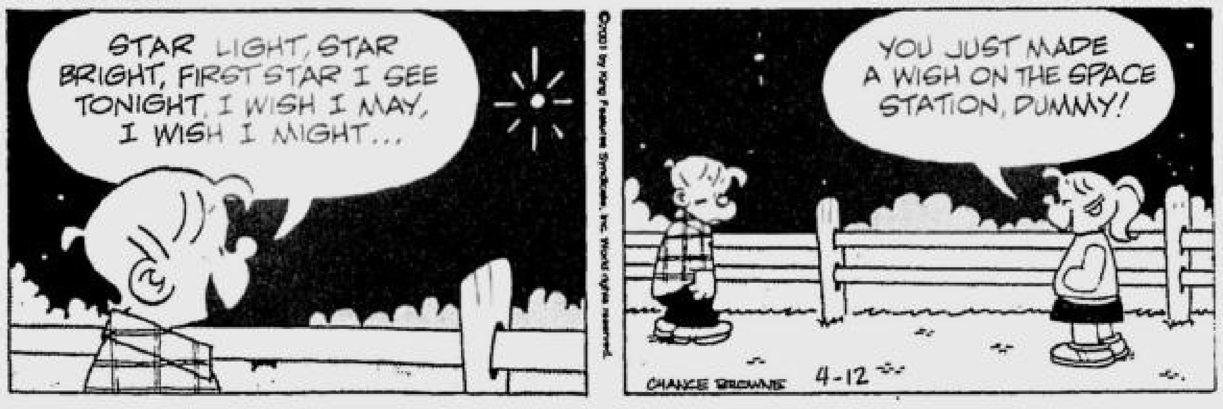
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


MY BACK IS KILLING ME!!
LET'S GET YOU SETTLED ON THE COUCH--JUST TAKE IT SLOW! GENTLE.
LOWER. LOWER... A LITTLE LOWER.
AIIIYE!
OOPS.
SHELTON

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL, YOU HAVE THE SECRET TO LIFE — NO CLOCK! NO CALENDAR!
YOUR WATCH ALWAYS SAYS: "NOW."
MINE ALWAYS SAYS: "DINNER TIME."
4-26

HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT, FIRST STAR I SEE TONIGHT, I WISH I MAY, I WISH I MIGHT...
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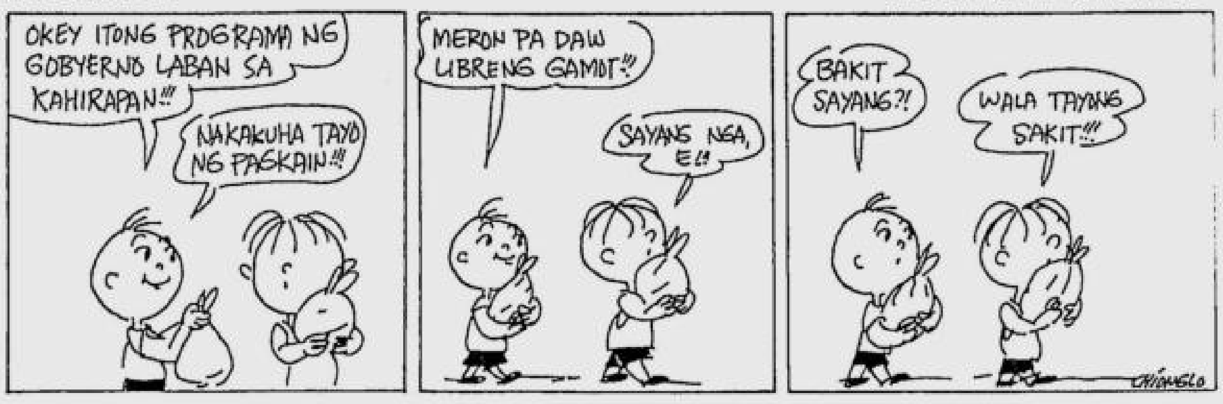
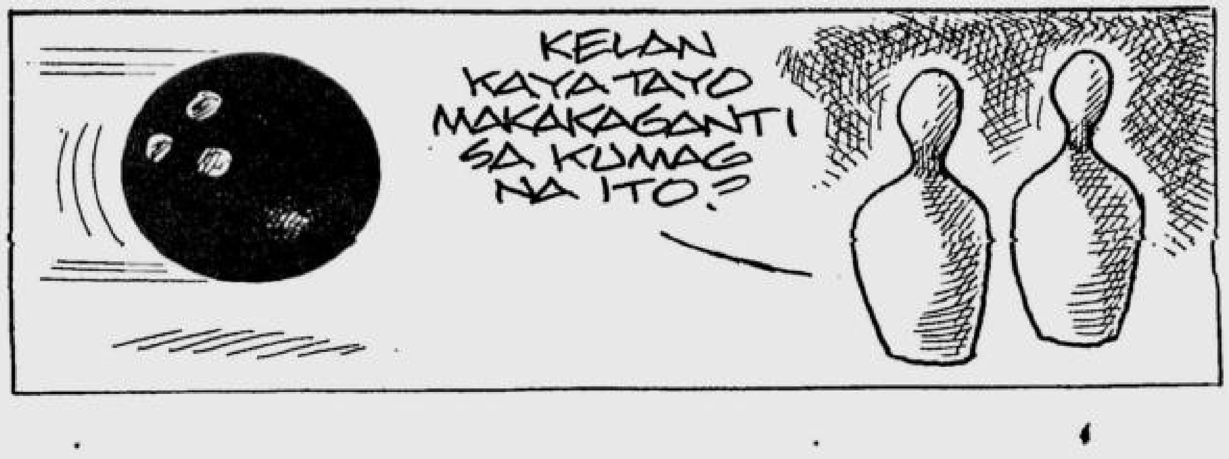
YOU JUST MADE A WISH ON THE SPACE STATION, DUMMY!
CHANCE BROWNE
4-12

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


OKEY ITONG PROGRAMA NG GOBYERNO LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN!!!
NAKAKUHA TAYO NG PASKAIN!!!
MERON PA DAW LIBRENG GAMOT!!
SAYANG NGA, E!!
BAKIT SAYANG?!
WALA TAYONG SAKIT!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


KELAN KAYA TAYO MAKAKAGANTI SA KUMAG NA ITO?

Festive delights

CELEBRATE the festive season of May with dishes your guests will surely talk about. Indulge in them as these dishes take centerstage during this merry month of food and fun: Garlicky Pork Tenderloin using FMD-free Monterey Pork and the new Star Garlic-flavored Margarine, Chicken Pandan featuring Magnolia Chicken Thigh Fillet, Pasta Primavera using Anchor Butter, and Mango-Cream Refrigerator Cake with Baker's Best Margarine.

For more recipes, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Food Group Culinary Center, Legaspi corner Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City or visit www. sanmiguelculinary. com.

Garlicky Pork Tenderloin

500 g Monterey Pork Tenderloin, cut into cubes
5 tbsp liquid seasoning
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
¼ tsp ground black pepper
¼ c Star Garlic Flavor Margarine

Marinate pork tenderloin in liquid seasoning, Worcestershire sauce and ground black pepper for 5 minutes. Drain meat (reserve marinade) and pan-fry marinated tenderloin in melted Star Garlic Flavor margarine until golden brown. Pour in marinade and cook for another minute. Serve warm.

Gai Haw Bai Toey

(Fried Chicken in Pandan Leaves)

½ kg Magnolia Chicken thigh fillets, halved
1 tbsp chopped garlic
2 tbsp chopped shallots
1 tbsp chopped fresh ginger
1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander leaves
1 tbsp chopped lemongrass
20 pc black peppercorns, crushed
2 tsp salt
2 tbsp soy sauce
1 1/3 c thick coconut milk
1 tbsp brown sugar
Fresh *pandan* leaves
Cooking oil for deep-frying
Thai chicken dip

Place garlic, shallots, ginger, coriander leaves, lemongrass, peppercorns and salt in a mortar and pestle. Pound into a smooth paste. Transfer to a shallow dish and add soy sauce, coconut milk and brown sugar. Stir to blend thoroughly, then add chicken. Marinate for at least 40 minutes. Wrap a piece of chicken (still coated with marinade) in *pandan* leaf securely. Heat oil in a wok until it starts to smoke and fry the chicken until tender, approximately 10 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and transfer directly to serving plate. Serve with Thai chicken dip.

Makes 16 pieces.

Pasta Primavera

½ kg fettuccini
¼ c sliced onions
1/3 c Anchor butter
1 c diced zucchini
1 c broccoli flowerets
1 c diced carrots
1 c *chicharo*
½ c chicken broth
250 g all-purpose cream
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
A pinch of nutmeg
Grated Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. Set aside. Sauté onion in butter. Sauté other vegetables in the following order: zucchini, carrots, broccoli and *chicharo*. Add chicken broth and simmer for 3 minutes. Vegetables should be tender yet crispy. Lower heat and add cream. Blend well. Season with salt and pepper and a pinch of nutmeg.

In a bowl, toss pasta with cooked sauce just before serving. Transfer into a casserole dish and top with a generous amount of grated cheese.

Makes 6 servings.

Mango Cream Refrigerator Cake

20 pc graham crackers
¼ c sweetened mango juice
1 c fresh mango bits
1 c fresh mango balls
1 90-g box crystal clear unflavored *gulaman*
1 c water
¾ c sweetened mango juice
Custard Cream:
1 c sugar
1/3 c all-purpose flour
3 c full cream milk
5 egg yolks
½ tsp vanilla
¼ c Baker's Best margarine

Prepare custard cream by combining sugar and flour in a thick saucepan. Mix well. While stirring, pour in milk and egg yolks. Cook over moderate heat while stirring. When slightly thickened, stir in vanilla and margarine. Cook further until mixture is very thick. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

To assemble, spread about a ½ c of cooled custard cream on an 8x8x4" square dish. Arrange four pieces (side by side) of graham crackers on top. Brush graham with mango juice then spread about ¼ c of mango bits on top. Repeat layer sequence to make a total of four layers more. Finish with a last layer of custard cream then arrange mango balls on top.

Meanwhile, dissolve *gulaman* in 1 c water and ¾ c mango juice. Mix well and allow to boil stirring once in a while. When *gulaman* is completely dissolved, remove from heat and allow to cool for about 3 minutes. Pour on top of mango balls and spread evenly. Chill for a least 3 hours before serving. Serves 12.

Flavorful regional cuisine

APART from historic cobblestone streets and the allure of ancient homes, Ilocos Sur is also known for its delectable vegetable cuisine such as the tasty *pinakbet*. Add even more flavor to this dish with a dash of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce and the region's favorite delicacy, deep-fried pork called *bagnet*. Culinary expert Eddie Basa shares his secret for this deliciously classic *pinakbet*, exclusively created for Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce.

Pinakbet with Bagnet

½ kg pork belly
2-3 bay leaves
50 g crushed garlic
1 tbsp rock salt
2 tsp cooking oil
2 tsp ginger
1 tbsp crushed garlic
150 g shallots
6 fresh tomatoes
½ c shrimp paste (*bagoong alamang*)
150 g *okra*
1 tbsp Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
150 g quartered *ampalaya*
300 g sliced eggplant

To make the *bagnet*, place the pork belly, garlic, bay leaves and salt in a pot and add water to cover the pork. Boil for one hour. Remove pork and let dry in hot oven. Then deep-fry the pork for 45 minutes or until done, turning the pork every 16 minutes to evenly cook the insides. Remove from heat when the pork is crisp and golden brown. Cut into large cubes and set aside.

Heat oil in a saucepan and sauté the garlic, ginger, shallots, tomatoes and *bagnet* until the liquid has evaporated, then add the *bagoong*. Do not stir. Simmer until the sauce thickens. Add *okra*, *ampalaya* and eggplant. Cover the pan and cook for 5 minutes more, then add Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce. Serves 4-5.

Tip: Other vegetables like string beans or sweet potatoes (*camote*) can also be added to the recipe.

Taste of Pampanga

Pampanga is known for both delicious Spanish-influenced cuisine such as *kaldereta* and exotic dishes such as deep-fried rice-field crickets. One of the all-time Kapampangan favorites is the *kilawin*, a dish characterized by its sharp, piquant flavor. Savor the tang of Pampanga's very own *kilawin*, made even more flavorful with Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce.

Kilawin Kapampangan

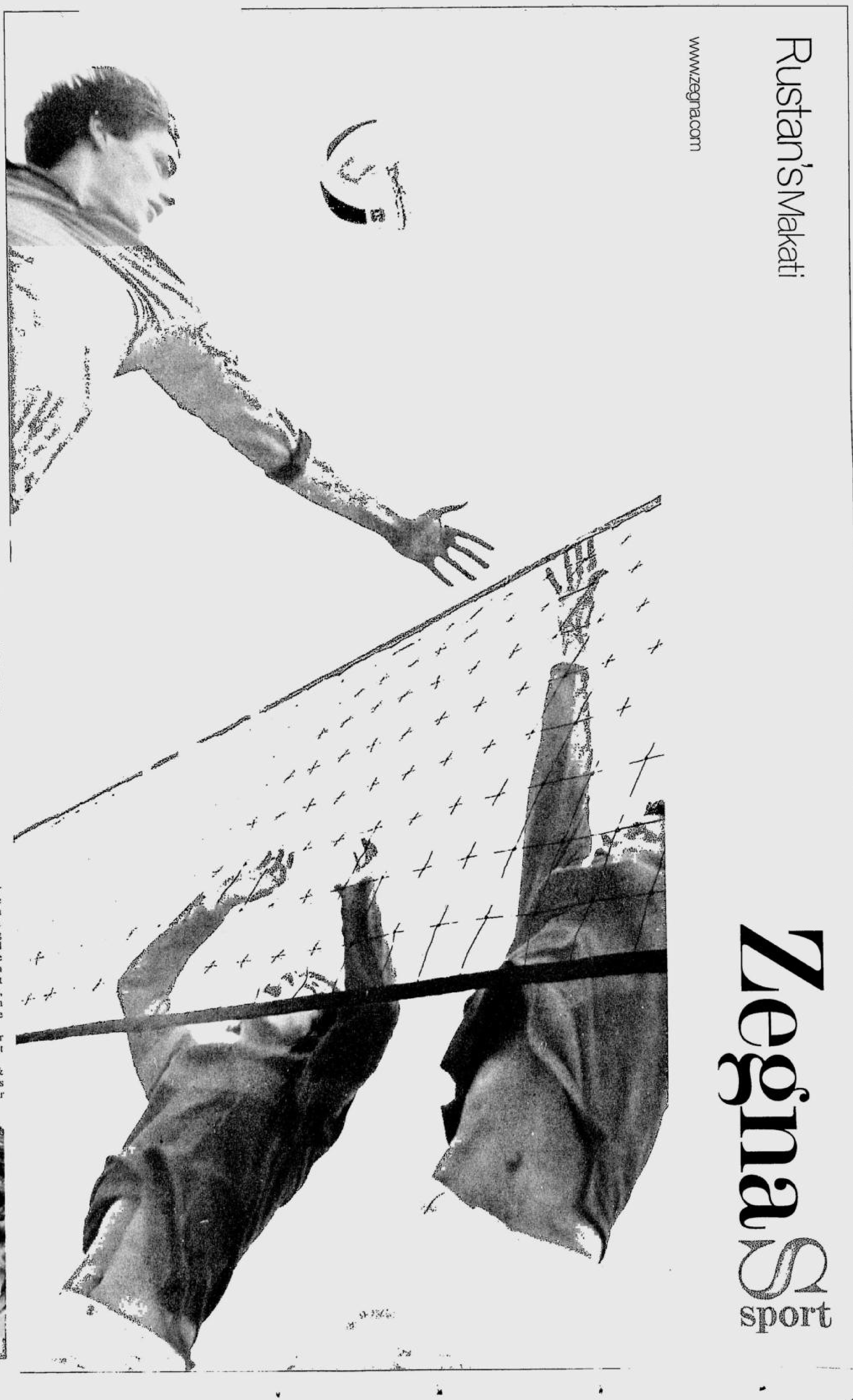
½ kg pork *kasim*
¼ kg pork liver
¾ c native vinegar
2 chopped onions
1-2 tsp Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
2 tbsp cooking oil
5 cloves crushed garlic
1 c water
1 tbsp peppercorns
Salt and pepper

Cut pork into half-inch squares and pork liver into 1-inch squares. Marinate pork in half of the vinegar, a chopped onion, salt and pepper and a teaspoon of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce. Marinate the pork liver separately in the remaining vinegar, onion and salt. Sauté garlic in hot oil, add pork and peppercorns and allow to boil. Press the pork meat against the bottom of the pan with a spoon and continue cooking until vinegar has almost evaporated. Add the pork liver and bring to a boil, pressing pork liver against the pan bottom. Add Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce and continue cooking pork and liver until done. Serves 4.

Chef's tip: The dish may be served a day after cooking to allow it to obtain more flavor. Small, hot peppers may be added when served for extra spice.

For more recipes and tips, write to the Lea & Perrins Cook-It-Rich Club, P.O. Box 13210, Ortigas Center Post Office, Pasig City, or fax 816-0014, or e-mail lp.club@skyinet.net.

KILAWIN Kapampangan



Wedı.
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aurant
ce Hotel

THE KIDS with chef-restaurateur Henry Canoy

GRADUATION at the Brady Gallery, with chef Ed and support staff

I know what you did last summer

The kids learned how to cook, serve, make friends and enjoy life

IN GOOD TASTE

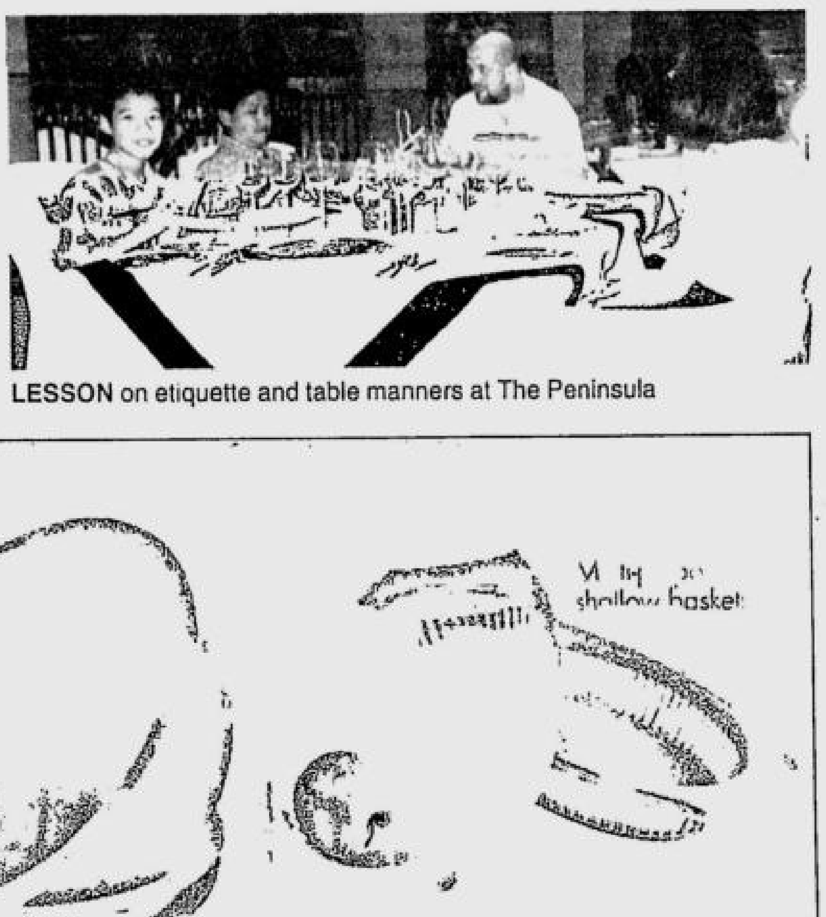
Doreen G. Fernandez

WHEN asked by teachers to write "How I spent my summer vacation," some children will have varied tales to tell. Some went camping, some took art lessons, some hung around the malls and some cooked.

Marc Besa, 13, had once learned to make French toast, and that seemed the end of it. Till the Asia Society held a two-day cooking class for kids (April 25-26), in which he participated. The children learned to make sushi, *lumpiang ubod*, *dimsum* and Asian desserts; they watched demonstrations of fruit and vegetable carving and wok cooking by New World chefs; did a Chinese kitchen tour, and heard guest chefs Sandy Daza and Henry Canoy.

Sonia Ner of Asia Society was amazed at how much more involved the boys were compared to the girls, and what good questions they asked. Miguel Perez, a third grader at the Ateneo, asked Henry if he could do the Cheese Nori Roll Tempura with hard instead of soft cheese. And for Sandy's Asian Meatloaf, he asked if he could use egg whites instead of whole eggs to make the dish healthier. One asked Henry how he came to combine such unlikely foods as cheese, *nori*, pesto and strawberry purée. Henry answered, "Cooking is creative; use your imagination and do not be afraid to experiment."

Marc's next cooking encounter was signing up for the children's classes at Chef Ed Quimson's Brada Gallery summer classes. These included Kitchen Safety for Kids, Cookie Buffet, Pizza Gallery, Pasta: All Shapes and Sizes, Sandwich Carnival, Summer Coolers, Table Setting and Etiquette, No-bake Desserts, Frying and Barbecuing for Kids, and a field trip to Nestlé Philippines.



LESSON on etiquette and table manners at The Peninsula

Marc (my grand-nephew) always brought home things he had cooked except for cookies, which he ate up by himself. He was getting very much interested, and even hung around watching adult classes—ham making, sushi making and others. He also confessed to Chef Ed that since the age of 5 he had always wanted to become a chef.

I caught up with them at the Peninsula Hotel's Old (New) Manila, where I was having lunch, and they were sitting with their mentor at a table to learn table etiquette and manners while they ate chocolate cake and cookies, the desserts The Pen had prepared for them.

Chef Ed was strict: he had told them to come "semi-formal" (no baggy shorts and T-shirts), and checked their attire. He taught them how to sit up straight, insisted that they take notes as he taught them the order of serving: girls first, then boys, or the guest of honor first (even if it is a boy? one asked). He showed them how to unfold their napkins; asked them to identify the array of glasses on the table, and would not allow them to eat until they were holding their cutlery properly.

They were taken on a tour of the kitchen, given a briefing by the Peninsula personnel, and finally were allowed to eat. The desserts disappeared fast, especially the cookies.

Graduation

I was invited to the children's graduation on the last day of the summer classes, and was impressed. Each one had assignments for the day: March did

I KNOW/p.D3

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GSIS approves big pension hike

Disability and Old-age/retirement pensioners have reason to rejoice. They will receive an unprecedented increase of as high as 25% in their monthly pensions from the GSIS effective January 2002.

The increase, to be implemented on a graduated scale depending on the retiree's or disability pensioner's year of retirement, shall be implemented over and above the usual ten percent increase granted by the GSIS to all disability and old-age pensioners.

The minimum pension increase of 10% is higher than the projected inflation rate for next year which is pegged at 6.5 to 7%. The System shall appropriate an additional amount of P745.74 million to cover for the increase and a hefty P4.14 billion additional reserve requirement to ensure that pensioners will continue to enjoy the benefit in the years to come.

This welcome development in pension came after actuarial studies by the System vis-à-vis its projected long term viability. The GSIS Board of Trustees saw the pension hike as necessary to enable pensioners to cope with the increasing cost of living. The System has consistently granted a 10 % increase in pensions in the past fourteen years. With next year's graduated increase, the more senior pensioners stand to receive a higher and much needed assistance from the GSIS:

INCREASE IN PENSIONS
Effective January 2002

YEAR OF RETIREMENT	PERCENTAGE RATE OF INCREASE	MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF INCREASE*
1976 and Earlier	25%	P 3,150.00
1977 to 1983	20%	P2,520.00
1984 to 1989	15%	P1,890.00
1990 and Later	10%	P1,260.00

* does not apply to RA7699 pro-rata pensions

The pension increase does not cover deferred annuitants or the retirees/survivors who received in advance their guaranteed pensions in the form of lump sums and who shall be resuming their regular monthly pensions after calendar year 2002. They shall only be entitled to increases that will be granted after the expiration of their guaranteed period.

The GSIS will also grant a 10% increase in Basic Survivorship Pension.

GSIS retirees will receive a hefty share of GSIS earnings because of the increase in pension and the Pension Loan Program. *(File photo)*

PENSION LOAN PROGRAM: Caring for the Retirees

Today, on its 64th Anniversary, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) launches a novel program for its retirees – the Pension Loan Program.

Considered a first in social insurance benefits, the GSIS Pension Loan Program was conceived by GSIS President and General Manager Winston F. Garcia to respond to the needs of 108,588 disability and old-age pensioners. Initially, P900 million has been appropriated to fund the program for the first seven months of its implementation (June to December 2001).

Through the GSIS Pension Loan Program, qualified retirees shall be granted the opportunity to borrow one, two or three times the amount of their monthly pension but not to exceed P20,000. The loan window is open to old age and disability pensioners who do not have any outstanding stock purchase loans. The loan carries a reasonable interest rate of 8% per annum. The monthly amortization on the loan shall be paid in twelve months through automatic deductions from the regular pensions. Loans may be renewed after full payment.

Pensioner- applicants who wish to apply for pension loans may submit their loan applications at the Pension Administration Department, GSIS, Pasay City, or at the Branch Office in charge of mailing their pension checks. Pensioners enrolled in the Pension-Payment-Thru-Banks Program, are advised to proceed to the office receiving the abstract of their pension. The pension loan shall be processed within 8 working hours that the documentary requirements are received.

The GSIS Pension Loan Program is the newest loan window of the System and forms part of the new administration's thrust of investing in the members. It is expected to address the clamor to create a loan facility that will answer the needs of pensioners who become unwilling victims of usurious lenders.

On stream to a 50% annual growth rate

GSIS income increased by 42% on 1st quarter

Posting a remarkable increase of 42.19% in net income on the first quarter of 2001, the GSIS is on track to a 50% annual growth rate this year.

The pension fund earned P7.7 billion in the first quarter of 2001 compared to only P5.409 billion for the same period last year. Its total net income is projected to reach P30 billion towards the end of the year, a huge increase from the P20 billion net income earned in year 2000.

GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia is eyeing premium contributions and various investment instruments as the main sources of the corporation's earnings.

Income from investment is expected to further go up with Garcia's plan to rationalize the GSIS' investment strategy. Investment income registered a 21.32% growth at P142 billion on the first quarter of the year. The corporation's financial reserves is now in the level of P179 billion backed up by P188 billion in total resources. Liquid and near-liquid assets amount to a hefty P96 billion.

"We have more than enough resources to upgrade our services, settle our obligations and enhance existing benefits and services. Thus, the GSIS will continue to have the capacity to pay all its obligations until and even beyond the next millenium." Garcia said.

Three months after Garcia was appointed as GSIS PGM, he was able to make considerable improvements in the pension fund's performance. He successfully shortened the processing time for loans and claims; increased by 12% from last year's figure the number of social security claims settled (24,337 to 27,288); and hiked by 56% the number of salary loans (123,819 to 192,708) granted to member-borrowers. He also reached out to members in remote provinces by opening eight more GSIS branches in Bayombong, Kidapawan, Pagadian, Tagum, General Santos, Maasin, Catbalogan and Iligan Branch offices.

Garcia also committed to introduce breakthroughs in the history of the GSIS. Among these are the following: Pension Loan Program; *Bahay Ko*, an all-new housing loan package with free house design and plan; GSIS Smart ID with the combined features of an ATM card and built-in e-purse; and buy-out of public teachers' loans.

"It will be a complete turnaround from the System's previous thrusts and directions. Instead of investing in big companies, we will invest on the members. And I know you will agree with me when I say that for a social security institution like the GSIS, it makes more sense to lend to members than to big businesses," Garcia stressed.

Bahay ko: A beautiful home within your means

There is nothing more fulfilling than owning a pleasant, comfortable and structurally–sound home.

Beyond your means? Not anymore with the GSIS' *Bahay Ko* housing loan program.

To the average Filipino, constructing a house with an architectural plan is a luxury. In an attempt to save on cost, he usually relies on a *maestro carpentero* to execute his dream house design. But more often than not, he ends up spending more than what is necessary yet come up with a poorly-planned structure.

This is precisely what *Bahay Ko* addresses. Its purpose is to give the GSIS member the rare opportunity of constructing a house of his own which is guaranteed to be beautiful, durable and suited to his needs.

Under *Bahay Ko* an availing member is given a free house design and plan including the bill of materials. He will then be made to choose from 12 original house designs grouped according to price: P150,000; P250,000; P350,000; and P450,000.

The design options were adopted from the winning entries in the *You Design, We Build* house design contest especially conducted by the GSIS for the *Bahay Ko* program. The top entries in the contest, which were selected by the cream of the crop in the housing industry, were crafted by a mix of young, creative minds and seasoned architects. In weaving the criteria for the contest, the GSIS made sure that the designs are pleasant, structurally sound, environment-friendly, responsive to Filipino family traditions, economical and has optimum space utilization.

Bahay Ko has an appropriation of P6 billion for the year 2001, enough to fund the construction of 25,000 houses for GSIS members whose loans shall be approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Under *Bahay Ko*, the loan should be used for constructing a house on a lot owned by the borrower; purchase of a lot and construction of a house therein; or construction of a house on a lot with outstanding balance. A member who is a permanent government employee and holder of a regular GSIS policy; has not been previously granted a GSIS housing loan; does not have any pending administrative and/or criminal case; has not been a co-maker of an outstanding GSIS housing loan; and has no arrearage in his social insurance premiums is qualified for the program.

Interested members are requested to fill up the *Bahay Ko* application form available in all GSIS branches nationwide and on-line through the GSIS website at www.gsis.gov.ph.

The requirements are: certificate of employment stating the latest monthly salary and allowances, including exemptions under LOI-L4 (certificate of no pending case); latest original pay slip; latest original income tax return; certified photocopy of the original title secured from the Registry of Deeds; Lot/Location plan with vicinity map duly signed and sealed by a geodetic engineer; latest declaration of real property (tax declaration); official receipts covering payment of real property taxes for the current year; two (2) signed passport size photos and P500 application fee.

Hi-tech GSIS SmartCard ID

Convenience and flexibility are the buzz words in the service industry nowadays.

The GSIS, as one of the strongest and most stable government corporation won't be left behind. Thus, it will soon issue the GSIS Smart ID to all its members.

The GSIS Smart ID is a membership card with the combined features of an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) card and built-in e-purse as provided by the e-PLDT Visa Cash platform. Members can avail of the benefits and services provided by the GSIS anytime and anywhere through the GSIS Smart ID.

In keeping up with the advances in technology, it may be used as an ATM card, e-card and cash card. Thus, when a member's application for a loan is approved, he can access the ATM machine to pay the proceeds of his loan. Similarly, a GSIS retiree can utilize the powerful network of ATM to obtain his pension via the GSIS Smartcard ID.

What's in it for the GSIS and its members? The Smart ID will ensure that all records are updated and all transactions are aboveboard. As members enroll for the Smartcard ID, the latest information on the member data records are updated, captured and stored in data bases, paving the way for a new system that will wipe out duplications and data fraud in the future. The finger print biometric feature of the GSIS Smart card will ensure that the card will be foolproof.

With the built-in e-purse provided by e-PLDT, the Smart ID may be eventually used for retail, mass transport, fastfood, vending, parking, movies, payphones, internet and utility bills transactions.

Who could ask for more?

GSIS to buy out teachers loans

A GSIS project in the pipeline is a P5 billion package designed to relieve government teachers from the burden of paying exorbitant interest rates for loans sourced from private lending agencies.

The Memorandum of Agreement that shall put the buy-out program in effect is being perfected by the GSIS and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS).

The objective of the buy-out program is to assist DECS to increase the teachers' net take-home pay to at least 50% of their gross salary.

A good majority of the half-a-million government teachers stand to benefit from the program since they will only be charged 12% interest by the GSIS.

For the GSIS, The P5 billion loan package would have a 95% collection efficiency as repayments will be made through automatic deduction from the teachers' payroll. Default rate is zero because the outstanding balance of the loan can be deducted from the retirement proceeds of the teacher-borrowers.

Baha

The new GSIS Individual R

Purposes of the loan

1. Construction of a house on a lot owned by the borrower;
2. Construction of a house on a lot purchased by a member but still with an outstanding balance;
3. Purchase of a lot and construction of a house thereon.

Borrower's qualifications

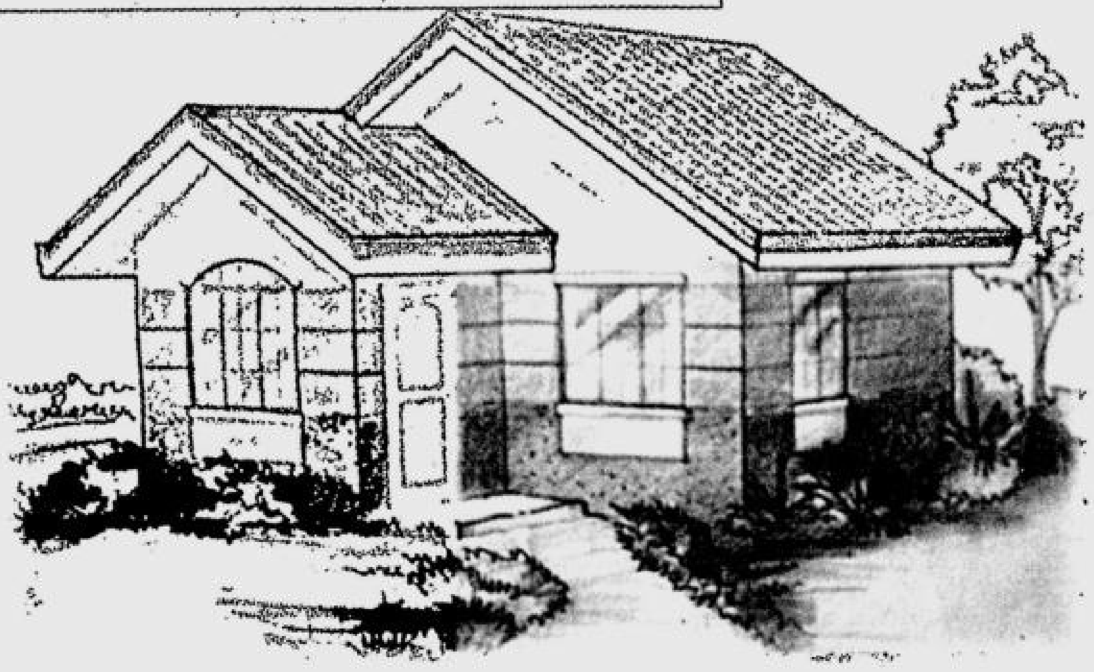
1. Active government service with a permanent status, and a holder of a regular GSIS Policy Contract.
2. Not previously granted housing loan by the GSIS.
3. No pending administrative and/or criminal case.
4. Not of compulsory retirement age.
5. Not a co-maker of an outstanding GSIS housing loan.
6. Up-to-date in the payment of social insurance premiums.

Term of the loan

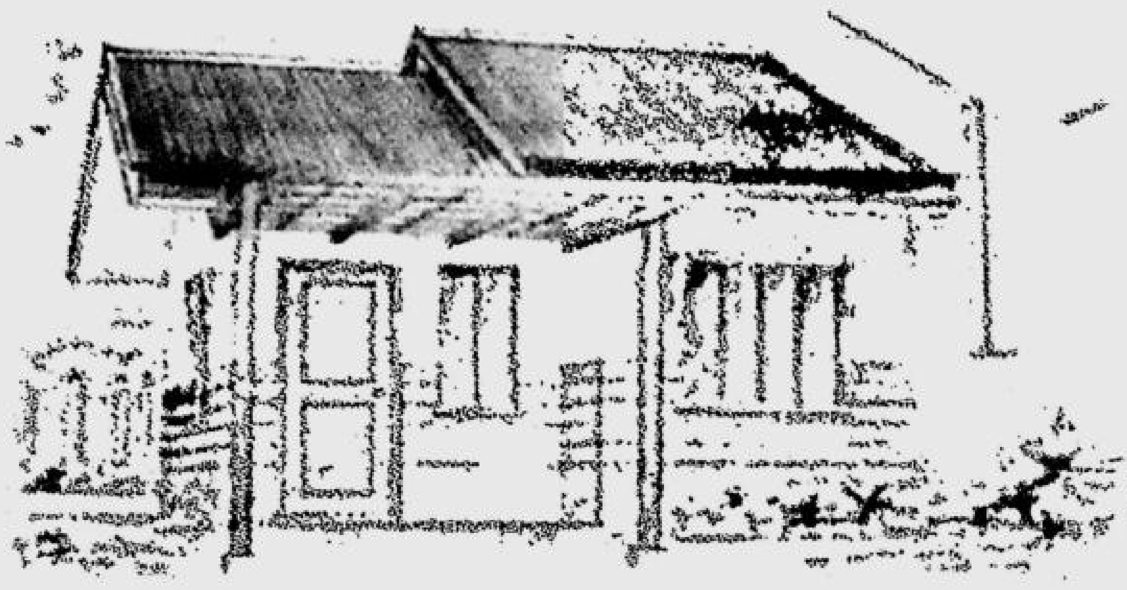
- 25 years for loan packages of P181,000 to 500,000
- 30 years for P180,000 and below (socialized package)

The term shall be in multiples of five (5) and must not go beyond the applicant's 70th birth month.

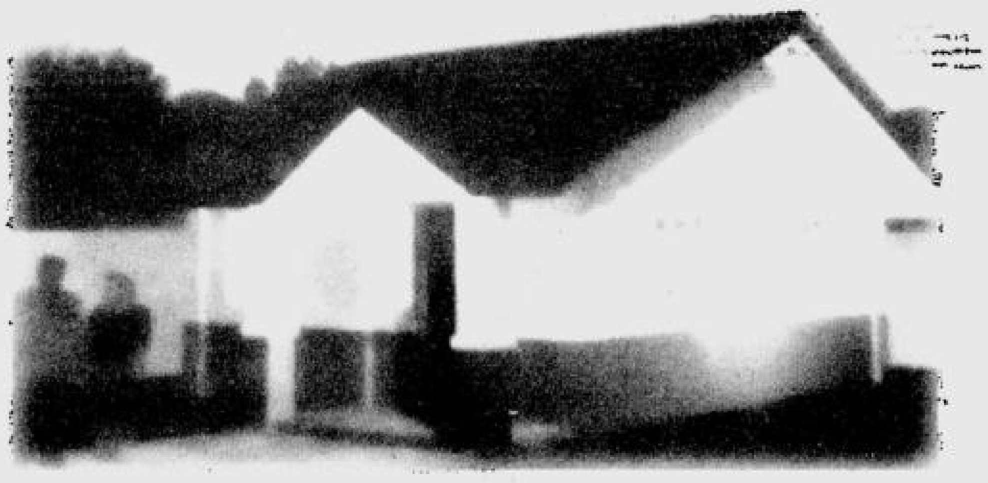
Designs for houses worth P150,000



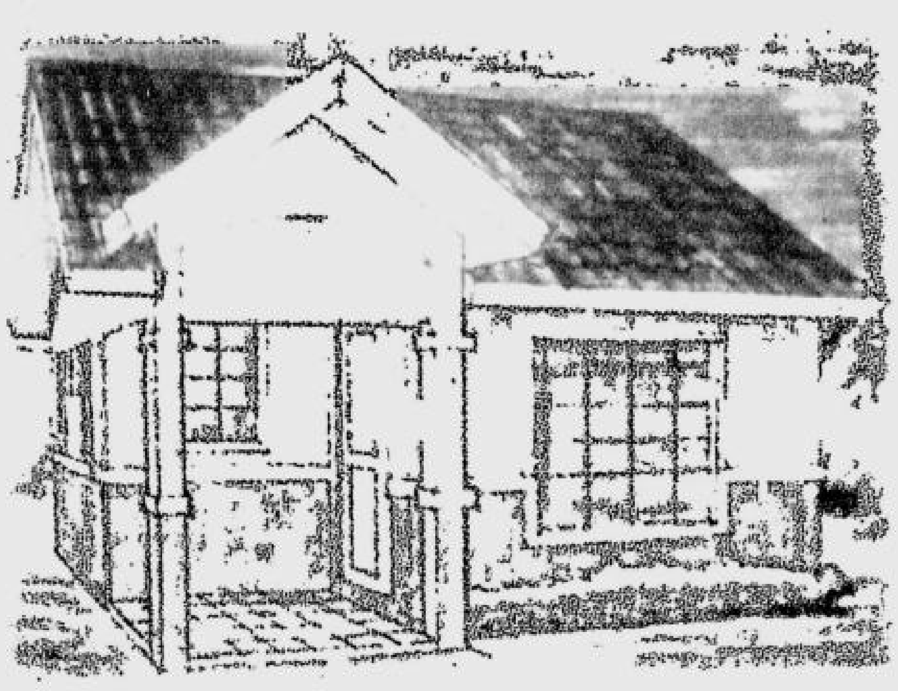
Floor area: 30 sq.m.
1 Bedroom



Floor area: 33 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms



Floor area: 22.50 sq.m.
1 Bedroom



Floor area: 42 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms

MESSAG

I have always emphasized that the centerpiece of my administration is t invest on our members. Hence, from day one of my term, I began th quest for the best programs that will cater to the individual needs o government workers. And there is no better way to achieve this than b making the elusive dream of owning a beautiful home within the reac of ordinary members. Thus, we revised our previous housing loa programs, went back to direct lending and targeted members who ow lots but lack the resources to build a house.

Our efforts paved the way for the development of a loan win dow which we call *Bahay Ko* to be sourced from the GSIS Individua Real Estate Loan program.

Bahay Ko may be considered a breakthrough in the mass hous ing industry as it offers features that are not found in other housin programs. Its uniqueness lies in its two new features. First, it offers free house design and plan including the bill of materials. Thus, th GSIS member can save at least 10% of the construction cost. Secon since members are not required to course their housing needs throug private developers nor build their house on a subdivision, they ca construct their house on a family lot and proudly say "*Kapitbahay k ang parents ko.*" Simply stated, a member only needs a lot to build hi house on, choose the design he prefers afterwhich the GSIS will giv him all the plans and specifications for such design. He may the proceed to construct his own house. This is what *Bahay Ko* is a about.

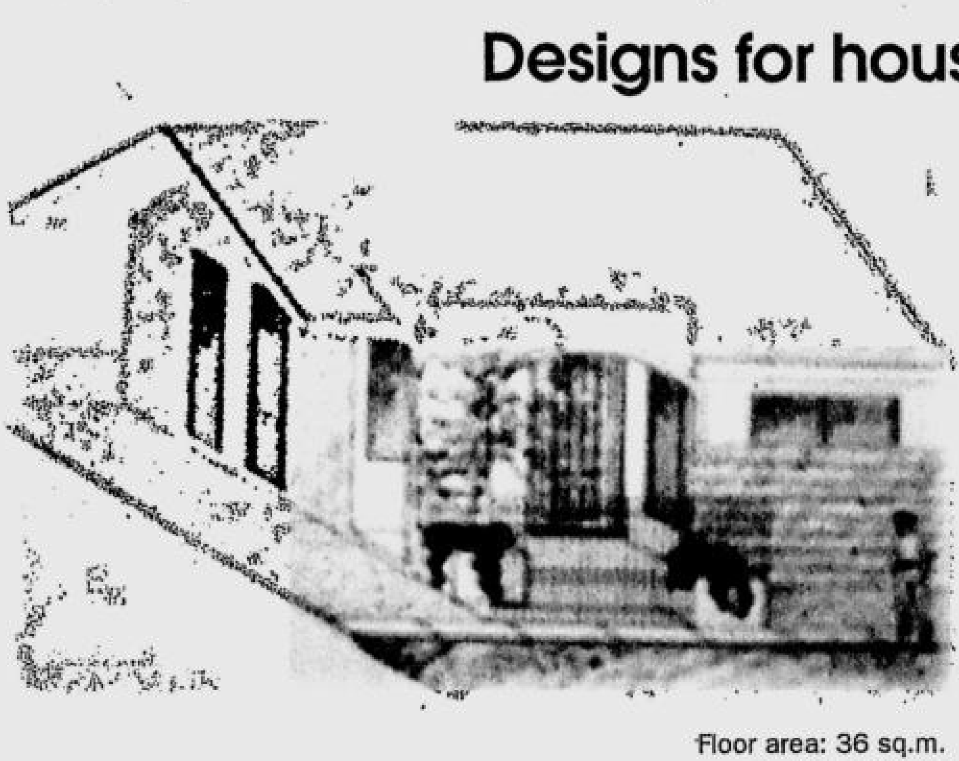
The members shall choose from the top 12 entries of a hous design contest conducted by the GSIS. Since the contest's main crite ria included structural, environmental and economic consideration the "winning" designs that we have chosen ensure that members wil have beautiful and durable yet affordable homes. The house design are grouped into four categories intended to meet the various incom levels of the members.

Application for the Bahay Ko program can be done either b visiting the nearest GSIS branch or by electronically accessing th GSIS website at .

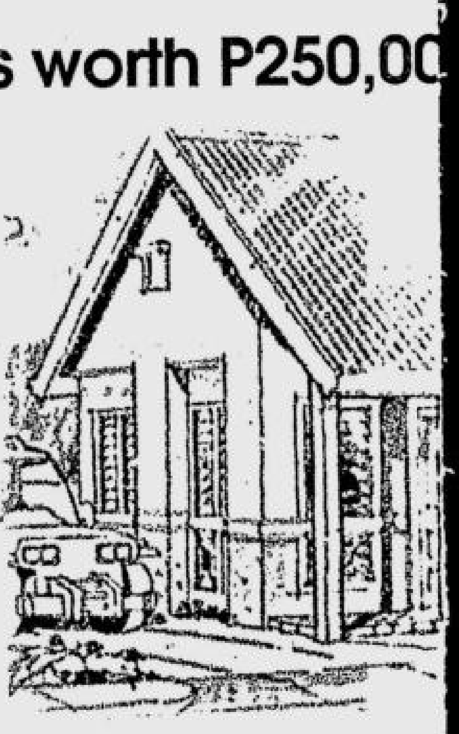
Member satisfaction will always be a key engine that will fue our goal to give our members the best. Through the newest housin loan window, the GSIS intends to make the members' dream houses reality. In the coming months, we will ensure that the GSIS will be come a part of their lives and aspirations through more of our worth while programs.

WINSTON F. GARCIA
President & General Manager

Designs for houses worth P250,00



Floor area: 36 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms



eal Estate Loan Program

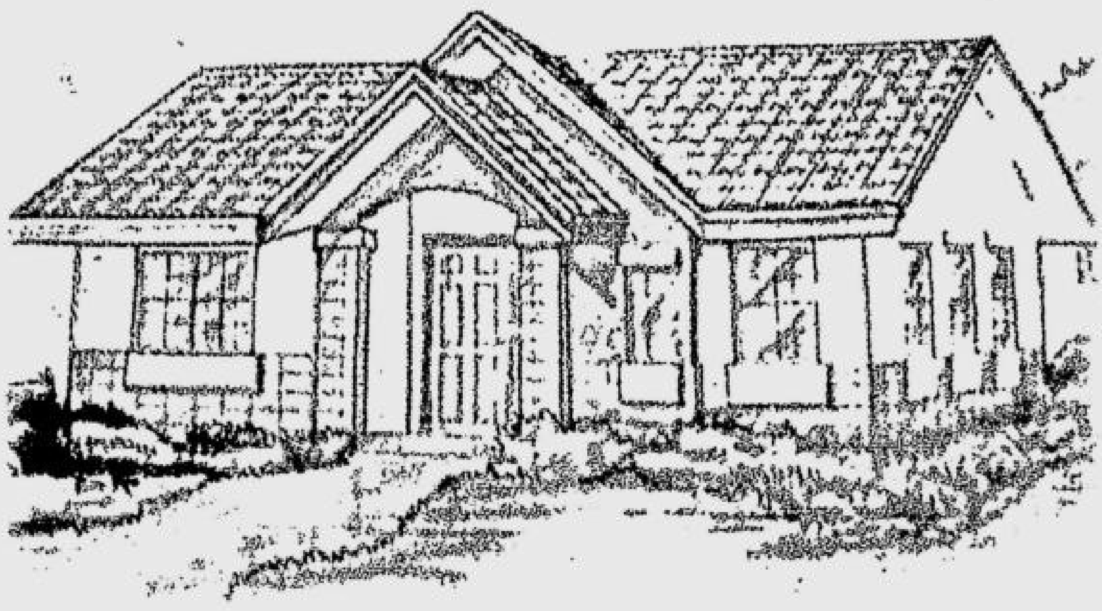
Documentary requirements

A. For Principal Borrower

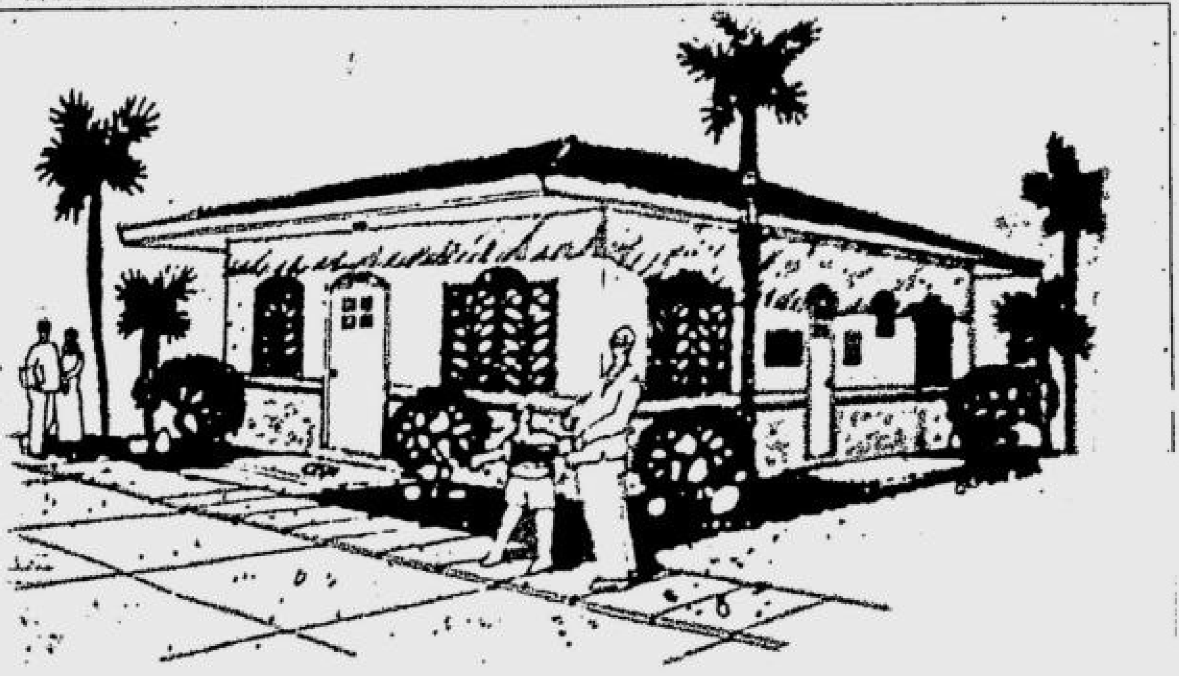
1. Certificate of employment stating the latest monthly salary and allowances, including exemptions under LOI-L4 (certificate of no pending case)
2. Original pay slips for the current and the past two months
3. Income Tax Returns for the last three years
4. Certified photocopy of original title secured from the Registry of Deeds
5. Lot/location plan/vicinity map signed and sealed by a Geodetic Engineer
6. Latest and previous years' Declaration of Real Property
7. Official Receipts of Real Property Taxes for the current year
8. Two (2) signed passport size pictures
9. P500.00 application fee (to be paid upon approval of the loan)

B. For Co-Borrower

1. Affidavit to act as co-borrower
2. Two (2) signed passport size pictures
3. Marriage Contract if spouse or Birth Certificate if child of principal borrower.

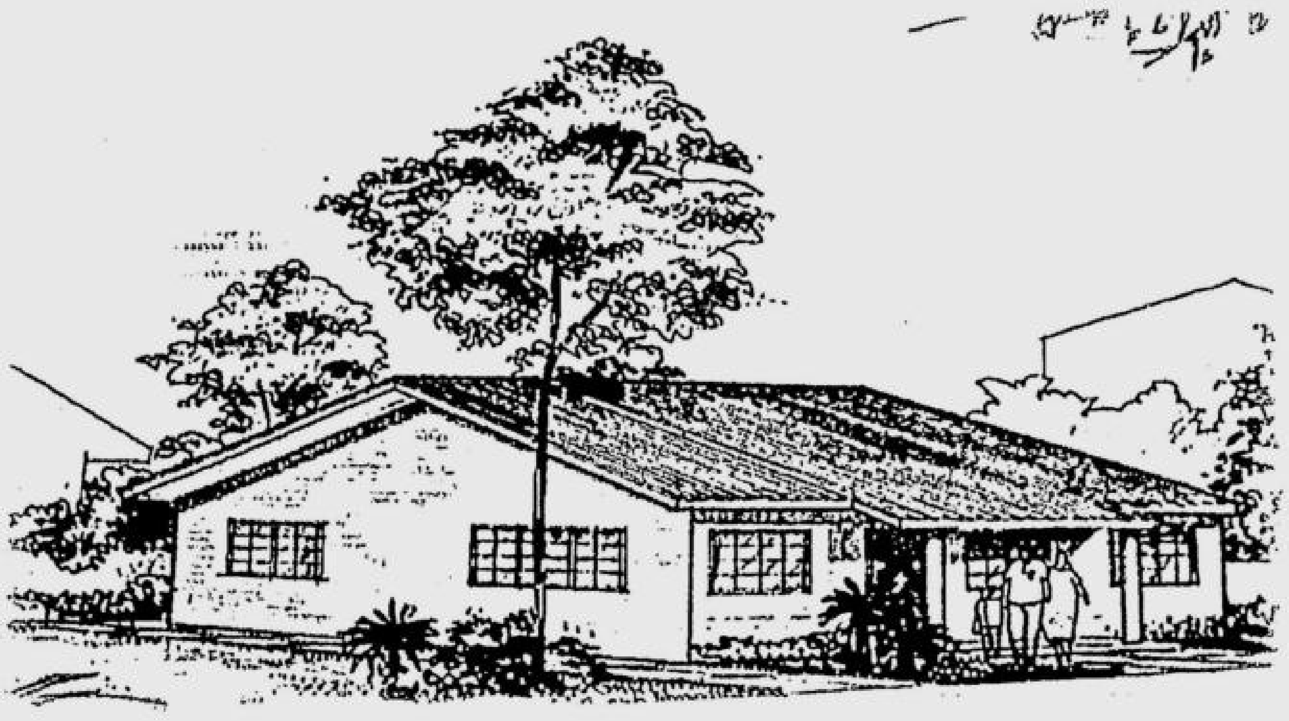


Floor area: 60 sq.m.
3 Bedrooms

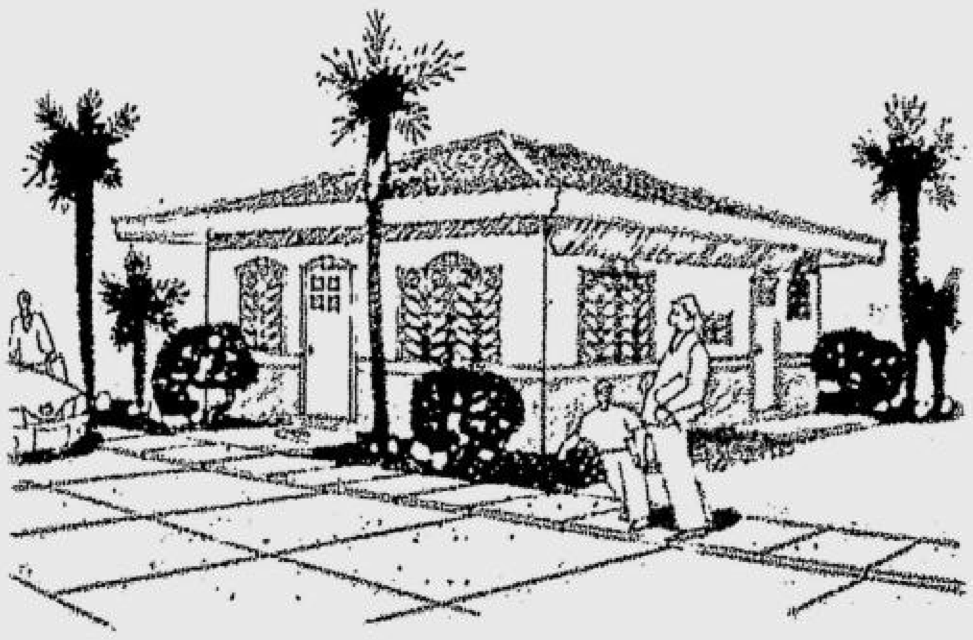


Floor area: 60 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms

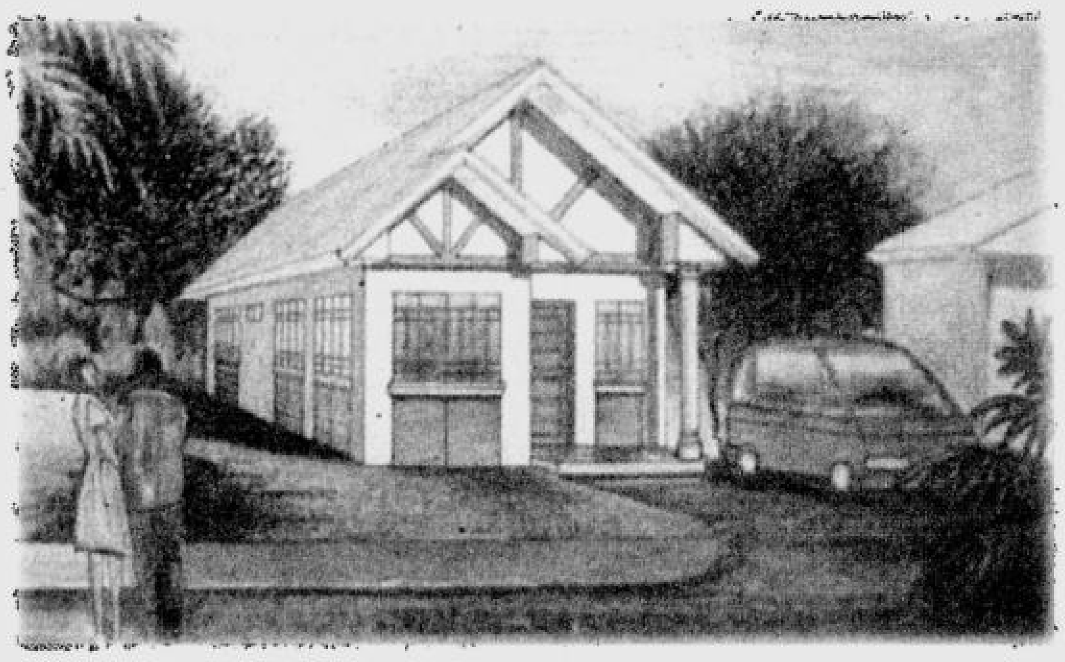
Designs for houses worth P450,000



Floor area: 55 sq.m.
3 Bedrooms

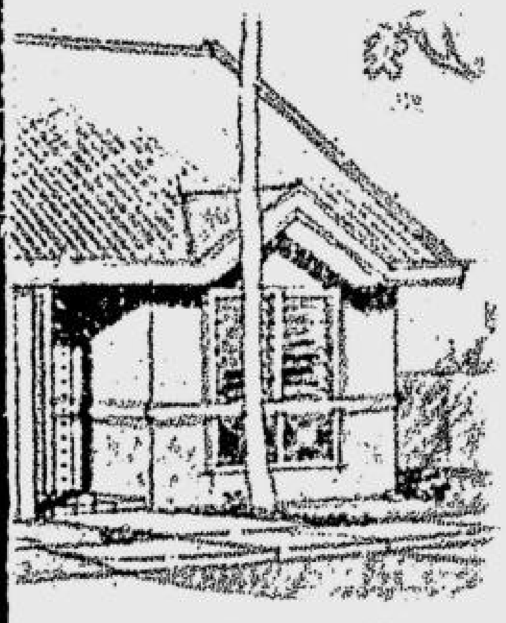


Floor area: 50 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms

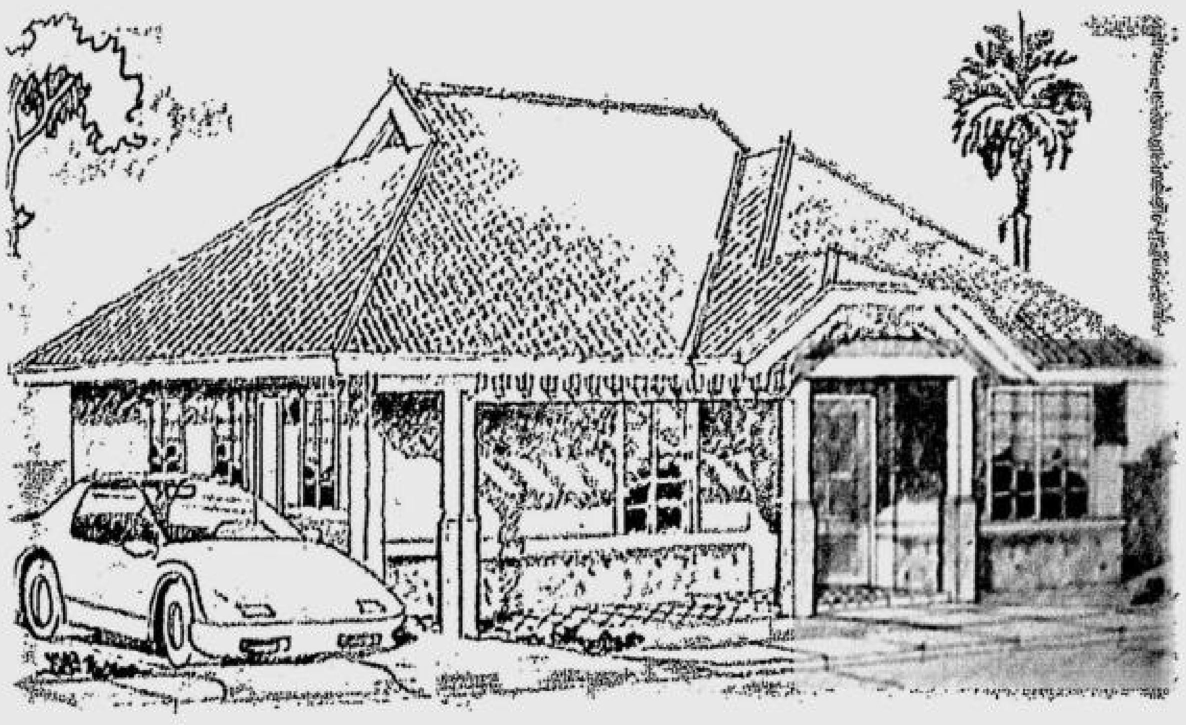


Floor area: 43 sq.m.
3 Bedrooms

Designs for houses worth P350,000



Floor area: 41 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms



Floor area: 51 sq.m.
2 Bedrooms

Increase in benefits, freeze on premium rates

At the GSIS, there is no need to increase premium rates. Yet we are improving and adding to existing benefits and services.

The GSIS is in robust financial health. Audited figures as of December 31, 2000 attest to this:

- Total revenues was P54.21 billion
- Net income was P20.57 billion
- Financial Reserves was more than P165 billion
- Liquid and near-liquid assets reached over P90 billion

As of March 30, 2001, GSIS Financial Statement showed:

- Total Revenues at P13.131 billion, 33.55% or P3.299 billion over the same period last year
- Net income at P7.690, 42.17% or P2.281 billion more than that of March 2000
- Financial Reserves at P 173 billion, 15.28% or P22.93 billion more than its level in March 2000
- Claims and benefits paid at P4.54 billion, 25.42% or P.921 billion higher than that of the same month last year

No doubt, the GSIS can meet all its financial obligations.
No doubt, the GSIS has the capability to grant and introduce new benefit programs.

Pension Increase

Recognizing the need to provide assistance to GSIS member-pensioners who, because of age and infirmity, have lost their capability for gainful employment, the GSIS approved an unprecedented increase in pension ranging from 10 to 25 percent for old-age and disability annuitants, effective January 1, 2002.

Minimum Monthly Pension has also been hiked to P2,250. The additional P4.138 billion reserve requirement for the increase in pension for the System's 108,000 old-age/disability pensioners has been approved.

Carer's Allowance Increase

The Carer's Allowance, introduced in 1995 to provide additional economic assistance to disability pensioners under RA 660 and PD 1146, has been increased such that by January 1, 2001, the present amount of P1,300 will be hiked to P1,500 a month.

The additional P28.39 million reserve requirement necessary for the increase in pension for the System's 1,699 disability pensioners has been approved.

Pension Loan

To enable pensioners to immediately and easily source cash within 8 working hours, the GSIS opened a new loan window specifically for its pensioner-retirees. This is the Pension Loan program where a GSIS pensioner can avail of the equivalent of his/her 1-, 2-, or 3-month pension but not to exceed P20,000.00.

Payable in 12 months deducted from the pensioner's monthly pension, the loan has a very affordable concessional interest rate of 8%.

The P900 million fund for this loan window will be available beginning June 1, 2001.

Bahay Ko

Shelter is one of the basic needs of man. Sensitive to the need, the GSIS has opened *Bahay Ko,* a unique housing program which will not only provide the funds to construct a house but also free plans and design including bill of materials, which can be used by the borrower to build his dream house at less cost.

Bahay Ko, with its P6 billion funding, has very liberal requirements and terms to make it very accessible even to the ordinary government worker.

Teachers' Loan Buy-Out

The GSIS, in cooperation with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, shall open a special loan package which will buy out the teachers' loans from private lenders. The package is intended to ease the debt burden of teachers who are charged with interest rates reaching as high as 106%.

Under the program, such loans shall be paid to the GSIS at 12% per annum for a period of two years.

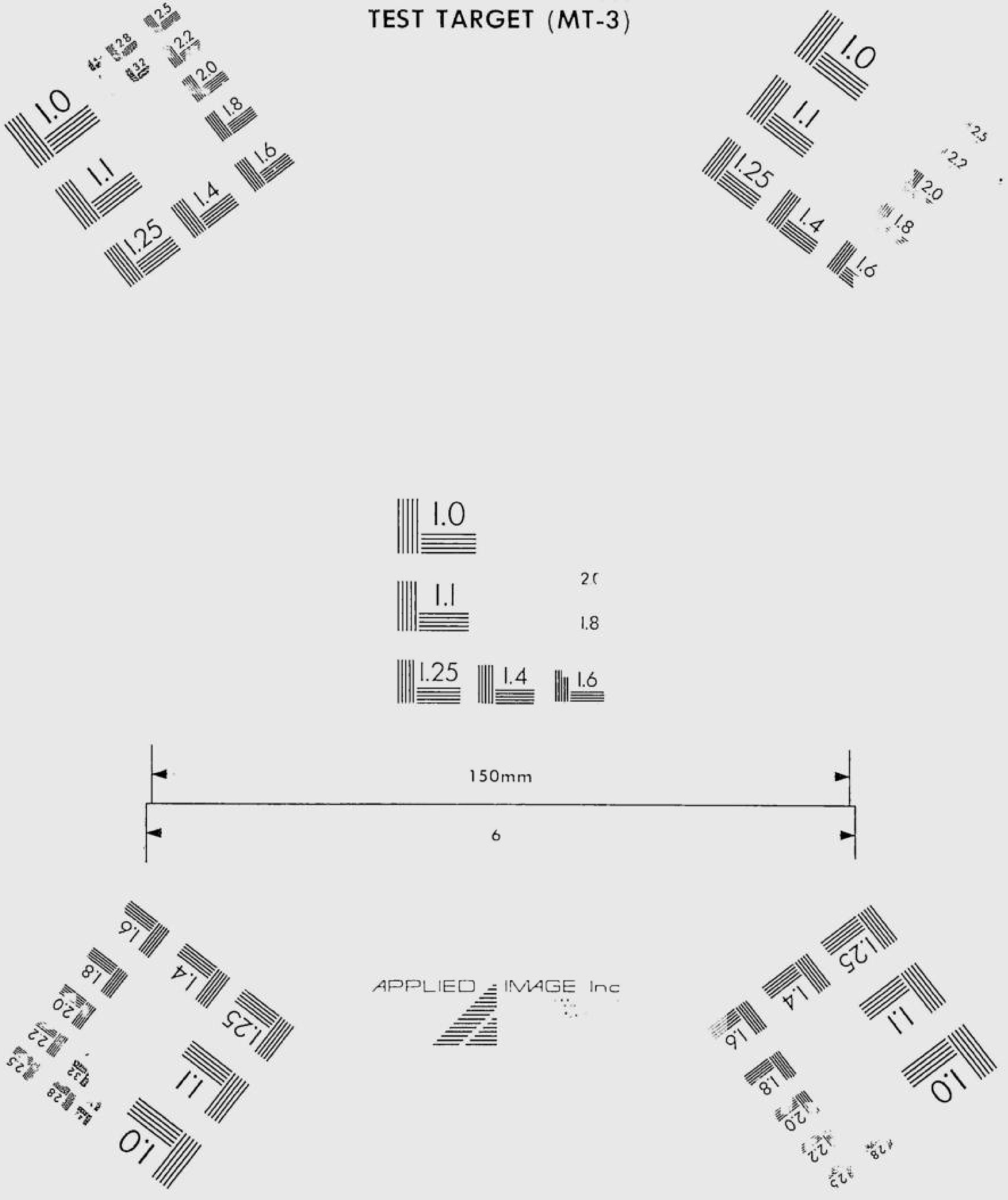
Initially, the GSIS shall allocate P5 billion for the program which can be availed of nationwide by its member-teachers.

Our Commitment

The members are our priority clients.
We shall strive to make our benefits and services responsive to their needs.
We shall give them the best social security protection possible
under the Philippine setting.
We shall see to it that our resources are efficiently managed and properly utilized.
We shall maintain our viability and stability as a social security institution.
These are our solemn responsibilities.
These, we commit to fulfill.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)


1.0
1.1
1.25
1.4
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
150mm
6

APPLIED IMAGE Inc

END

PLEASE REWIND